
922.08
hc/ब्रा
3269
00043269

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 28 September, 2015

THE

BRITISH THEATRE.


SUCH THINGS ARE

THE

BRITISH THEATRE;

OR,

A COLLECTION OF PLAYS,

WHICH ARE ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE, COVENT GARDEN, AND HAYMARKET.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

IN TWENTY-FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. XXIII.

SUCH THINGS ARE.
EVERY ONE HAS HIS FAULT.
WIVES AS THEY WERE.
LOVERS' VOWS.
TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1808.

43269

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,
BEDFORD BURY.

SUCH THINGS ARE;

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

43269

WITH REMARKS

BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

822.12



SAVAGE AND EVERINGWOOD,
PRINTERS, LONDON.

REMARKS.

The writer of this play was, at the time of its production, but just admitted to the honours of an authoress, and wanted experience to behold her own danger, when she attempted the subject on which the work is founded. Her ignorance was her protection. Had her fears been greater, or proportioned to her task, her success had been still more hazardous. A bold enterprize requires bold execution; and as skill does not always unite with courage, it is often advantageous, where cases are desperate, not to see with the eye of criticism: chance will sometimes do more for rash self-importance, than that judgment, which is the parent of timidity.

Such was the consequence on the first appearance of this comedy—its reception was favourable beyond the usual bounds of favour bestowed upon an admired play, and the pecuniary remuneration equally extraordinary.

There was novelty, locality, and invention in "Such Things are;" and the audience forgave, or, in their warmth of approbation, overlooked, improbability in certain events, incorrectness of language, and meanness, bordering on vulgarity, in some of the characters.

As the scene is placed in the East Indies, where the unpolished of the British nation so frequently resort to make their fortune, perhaps the last mentioned defect may be more descriptive of the manners of the English inhabitants of that part of the globe, than had elegance of dialogue, and delicacy of sentiment, been given them. Nevertheless, a more elevated style of conversation and manners in Sir Luke and Lady Tremor would not have been wholly improper, and would assuredly have been much more pleasing; especially to those who may now sit in judgment upon the work, as readers, and cold admirers of that benevolence, no longer the constant theme of enthusiastic praise, as when this drama was first produced.

When this play was written, in 1786, Howard, the hero of the piece, under the name of Haswell, was on his philanthropic travels through Europe and parts of Asia, to mitigate the sufferings of the prisoner. His fame, the anxiety of his countrymen for the success of his labours, and their pride in his beneficent character, suggested to the author a subject for the following pages. The scene chosen for its exhibition is the island of Sumatra; where the English settlement, the system of government, modes and habits of the natives, the residents, and the visitors of the isle, may well reconcile the fable and incidents of the drama to an interesting degree of possibility.

As Haswell is the hero of the serious part of this play, so is Twineall of the comic half. His character and conduct is formed on the plan of Lord Chesterfield's finished gentleman. That nobleman's Let-

ters to his Son excited, at least, the idea of Twineall in the author's mind; and the public appeared to be as well acquainted with his despicable reputation, as with the highly honourable one of Howard.

Death having robbed the world of that good man's active services, though the effect of his exertions will ever remain, a short account of the virtuous tendency of his inclinations, and success of his charitable pursuits, is at present requisite for some readers, as explanatory of the following scenes.

John Howard, to whose revered memory a statue is erected in St. Paul's Cathedral, with a suitable inscription, was born in 1726.

The life of Mr. Howard, till the year 1773, is of little note, or has no reference whatever to his subsequent renown. At that period he was living on his own estate at Cardington, near Bedford, a widower, with one child. Here he served the office of sheriff for the county, which, as he has declared, "brought the distress of prisoners immediately under his notice, and led him to form the design of visiting the gaols through England, in order to devise means for alleviating the miseries of the sufferers."

In 1774, he was examined before the House of Commons on the subject of prisons, and received the thanks of the House.

He then extended his benevolent views to foreign countries, making various excursions to all parts of Europe.

In 1789, he published an Account of the principal Lazarettos he had seen. In this work he signified his

intention of revisiting Russia, Turkey, and of extending his route into the East.—"I am not insensible," he says, "Of the dangers which must attend such a journey: Trusting, however, in the protection of that kind Providence which has hitherto preserved me, I calmly and cheerfully commit myself to the disposal of unerring Wisdom. Should it please God to cut off my life in the prosecution of this design, let not my conduct be uncandidly imputed to rashness or enthusiasm, but to a serious and deliberate conviction that I am pursuing the path of duty; and to a sincere desire of being made an instrument of more extensive usefulness to my fellow creatures, than could be expected in the narrower circle of a retired life."

He fell a sacrifice to his humanity; for visiting a sick patient at Cherson, who had a malignant fever, he caught the infection, and died January the 20th, 1790.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SULTAN	*Mr. Farren.*
LORD FLINT	*Mr. Davies.*
SIR LUKE TREMOR	*Mr. Quick.*
MR. TWINEALL	*Mr. Lewis.*
MR. HASWELL	*Mr. Pope.*
SYLVIRUS	*Mr. Holman.*
MR. MÉANRIGHT	*Mr. Macready.*
ZEDAN	*Mr. Fearon.*
FIRST KEEPER	*Mr. Thompson.*
SECOND KEEPER	*Mr. Cubitt.*
FIRST PRISONER	*Mr. Helme.*
SECOND PRISONER	*Mr. Gardener.*
GUARD	*Mr. Blurton.*
MESSENGER	*Mr. Ledger.*
LADY TREMOR	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
AURELIA	*Miss Wilkinson.*
FEMALE PRISONER	*Mrs. Pope.*

SCENE—The Island of Sumatra, in the East Indies.

Time of Representation—Twelve Hours.

SUCH THINGS ARE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Parlour at SIR LUKE TREMOR'S.

Enter SIR LUKE, *followed by* LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. I tell you, madam, you are two and thirty.

Lady. I tell you, sir, you are mistaken.

Sir Luke. Why, did not you come over from England exactly sixteen years ago?

Lady. Not so long.

Sir Luke. Have not we been married, the tenth of next April, sixteen years?

Lady. Not so long.

Sir Luke. Did you not come over the year of the great eclipse?—answer me that.

Lady. I don't remember it.

Sir Luke. But I do—and shall remember it as long as I live.—The first time I saw you was in the garden of the Dutch envoy: you were looking through a glass at the sun—I immediately began to make love to you, and the whole affair was settled while

the eclipse lasted—just one hour, eleven minutes, and three seconds.

Lady. But what is all this to my age?

Sir Luke. Because I know you were at that time near seventeen, and without one qualification except your youth, and your fine clothes.

Lady. Sir Luke, Sir Luke, this is not to be borne!

Sir Luke. Oh! yes—I forgot—you had two letters of recommendation from two great families in England.

Lady. Letters of recommendation!

Sir Luke. Yes; your character——that, you know, is all the fortune we poor Englishmen, situated in India, expect with a wife, who crosses the sea at the hazard of her life, to make us happy.

Lady. And what but our characters would you have us bring?—Do you suppose any lady ever came to India, who brought along with her friends or fortune?

Sir Luke. No, my dear: and what is worse, she seldom leaves them behind.

Lady. No matter, Sir Luke: but if I delivered to you a good character——

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, you did: and if you were to ask me for it again, I can't say I could give it you.

Lady. How uncivil! how unlike are your manners to the manners of my Lord Flint!

Sir Luke. Ay, you are never so happy as when you have an opportunity of expressing your admiration of him.—A disagreeable, nay, a very dangerous man—one is never sure of one's self in his presence—he carries every thing he hears to the ministers of our suspicious Sultan—and I feel my head shake whenever I am in his company.

Lady. How different does his lordship appear to me!—To me he is all *politesse.*

Sir Luke. Politesse! how should you understand

what is real *politesse?* You know your education was very much confined.

Lady. And if it *was* confined?——I beg, Sir Luke, you will cease these reflections: you know they are what I can't bear!—[*Walks about in a Passion.*]—Pray, does not his lordship continually assure me, I might be taken for a countess, were it not for a certain little grovelling toss I have caught with my head? which I learnt of you—learnt by looking so much at you.

Sir Luke. And now, if you don't take care, by looking so much at his lordship, you may catch some of his defects.

Lady. I know of very few he has.

Sir Luke. I know of many—besides those he assumes.

Lady. Assumes!

Sir Luke. Yes: Do you suppose he is as forgetful as he pretends to be?—no, no; but because he is a favourite with the Sultan, and all our great men, he thinks it genteel or convenient to have no memory; and yet, I'll answer for it, he has one of the best in the universe.

Lady. I cannot credit your charge.

Sir Luke. Why, though he forgets his appointments with his tradesmen, did you ever hear of his forgetting to go to court when a place was to be disposed of? Did he ever mistake, and send a bribe to a man out of power? Did he ever forget to kneel before the prince of this island, or to look in his highness's presence like the statue of Patient-resignation, in humble expectation?

Lady. Dear, Sir Luke——

Sir Luke. Sent from his own country in his very infancy, and brought up in the different courts of petty arbitrary princes here in Asia, he is the slave of every rich man, and the tyrant of every poor one.

Lady. " Petty princes!"—'tis well his highness, our Sultan, does not hear you.

Sir Luke. 'Tis well he does not—Don't you repeat what I say: but you know how all this fine country is harassed and laid waste by a set of princes—Sultans, as they style themselves, and I know not what—who are for ever calling out to each other, " That's mine," and " That's mine;"—and " You have no business here," and " You have no business there;"——and " *I* have business every where. [*Strutting.*]—Then, " Give *me* this," and " Give *me* that;"—and " Take this," and " Take that."

" [*Makes Signs of fighting.*

Lady. A very elegant description, truly.

Sir Luke. Why, you know 'tis all matter of fact: and Lord Flint, brought up from his youth among these people, has not one *trait* of an Englishman about him: he has imbibed all this country's cruelty; and I dare say wou'd mind no more seeing me hung up by my thumbs, or made to dance upon a red hot gridiron——

Lady. That is one of the tortures I never heard of!—O! I should like to see that of all things!

Sir Luke. Yes, by keeping this man's company, you'll soon be as cruel as he is: he will teach you every vice. A consequential, grave, dull——and yet with that degree of levity which dares to pay addresses to a woman, even before her husband.

Lady. Did not you declare, this minute, his lordship had not a *trait* of his own country about him?

Sir Luke. As you observe, that last *is* a *trait* of his own country.

Enter SERVANT *and* LORD FLINT.

Serv. Lord Flint—— [*Exit* SERVANT.

Lady. My lord, I am extremely glad to see you: we were just mentioning your name.

Lord. Were you, indeed, madam? You do me great honour.

Sir Luke. No, my lord—no great honour.

Lord. Pardon me, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. But, I assure you, my lord, in what I said I did *myself* a great deal.

Lady. Yes, my lord; and I'll acquaint your lordship what it was. [*Going up to him.*

Sir Luke. [*Pulling her aside.*] Why, you wou'd not inform against me, sure! Do you know what would be the consequence? My head must answer it. [*Frightened.*

Lord. Nay, Sir Luke, I insist upon knowing.

Sir Luke. [*To her.*] Hush! hush!——So, my lord, pray excuse me: your lordship, perhaps, may think what I said did not come from my heart; and I assure you, upon my honour, it did.

Lady. O, yes—that I am sure of.

Lord. I am extremely obliged to you. [*Bowing.*

Sir Luke. O, no, my lord, not at all—not at all. [*Aside to her.*] I'll be extremely obliged to *you*, if you will be silent.—Pray, my lord, are you engaged out to dinner to-day? for her ladyship and I are.

Lady. Yes, my lord, and we should be happy to find your lordship of the party.

Lord. "Engaged out to dinner?"—Egad, very likely—very likely: but if I am, I have positively forgotten where.

Lady. We are going to——

Lord. No—I think, now you put me in mind of it—I think I have company to dine with me. I am either going out to dinner, or have company to dine with me; but I really can't tell which: however, my people know—but I can't recollect.

Sir Luke. Perhaps your lordship *has* dined: can you recollect whether you have?

Lord. No, no—I have not dined——What's o'clock?

Lady. Perhaps, my lord, you have not breakfasted?

Lord. O, yes; I've breakfasted—I think so—but, upon my word, these things are of such slight consequence, they're very difficult to remember.

Sir Luke. They are, indeed, my lord—and I wish all my family wou'd entirely forget them.

Lord. What did your ladyship say was o'clock?

Lady. Exactly twelve, my lord.

Lord. Bless me! I ought to have been somewhere else then—an absolute engagement.—I have broke my word—a positive appointment.

Lady. Shall I send a servant?

Lord. No, no, no, no—by no means—it can't be helped now; and they know my unfortunate failing: besides, I'll beg their pardon, and that will be ample satisfaction.

Lady. You are very good, my lord, not to leave us.

Lord. I cou'd not think of leaving you so soon—the happiness I enjoy in your society is so extreme——

Sir Luke. That were your lordship to go away now, you might never remember to come again.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A gentleman, sir, just landed from an English vessel, says he has letters to present to you.

Sir Luke. Show him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.]—*He* has brought his character too, I suppose.

Enter MR. TWINEALL, *in a fashionable Undress.*—SIR LUKE *introduces himself.*

Twi. Sir Luke, I have the honour of presenting to you—[*Gives Letters.*]—one from my Lord Cleland—one from Sir Thomas Shoestring—one from Colonel Tril.

Sir Luke. [*Aside.*] Who, in the name of wonder, have my friends recommended?—[*Reads, while* LORD FLINT *and the* LADY *talk apart.*]—No—as I live, the

is a gentleman, and the son of a lord—[*Going to* LADY TREMOR.] My dear, that is a gentleman, notwithstanding his appearance.—Don't laugh; but let me introduce you to him.

Lady. A gentleman!—Certainly: I did not look at him before—but now I can perceive it.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, give me leave to introduce Lady Tremor to you, and my Lord Flint—this, my lord, is the Honourable Mr. Twineall, from England, who will do me the favour to remain in my house till he is placed in some lucrative situation here. [*They bow.*]—I beg your pardon, sir, for the somewhat cool reception Lady Tremor and I at first gave you—but I dare say her ladyship was under the same mistake as myself—and, I must own, I took you at first sight for something very different from the person you prove to be: for really, no English ships having arrived in this harbour for these five years past, and the dress of English gentlemen being so much altered since that time——

Twi. But, I hope, Sir Luke, if it is, the alteration meets with your approbation.

Lady. O!—it is extremely elegant and becoming.

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, I don't doubt but you think so; for I remember you used to make your favourite monkey wear just such a jacket, when he went out a visiting.

Twi. Was he your favourite, madam?—Sir, you are very obliging. [*Bowing to* SIR LUKE.

Sir Luke. My lord, if it were possible for your lordship to call to your *remembrance* such a trifle—

Lady. Dear Sir Luke—— [*Pulling him.*

Lord. Egad, I believe I do call to my remembrance—[*Gravely considering.*]—Not, I assure you, sir, that I perceive any great resemblance—or, if it was so—I dare say it is merely in the dress——which I must own strikes me as most ridiculous—very ridiculous indeed.——

Twi. My lord!

Lord. I beg pardon, if I have said any thing that ——Lady Tremor, what did I say?——make my apology, if I have said any thing improper—you know my unhappy failing. [*Goes up the Stage.*

Lady. [*To* TWINEALL.] Sir, Lord Flint has made a mistake in the word "ridiculous," which I am sure he did not mean to say: but he is apt to make use of one word for another. His lordship has been so long out of England, that he may be said, in some measure, to have forgotten his native language.

[*His* LORDSHIP *all this Time, appears absent.*

Twi. You have perfectly explained, madam.—Indeed, I ought to have been convinced, without your explanation, that if my lord made use of the word *ridiculous*, even intentionally, that the word had now changed its former sense, and was become a mode to express satisfaction—or he wou'd not have used it, in the very forcible manner he did, to a perfect stranger.

Sir Luke. What, Mr. Twineall, have you new fashions for *words* too in England, as well as for dresses? and are you equally extravagant in their adoption?

Lady. I never heard, Sir Luke, but that the fashion of words varied, as well as the fashion of every thing else.

Twi. But what is most extraordinary, we have now a fashion, in London, of speaking without any words at all.

Lady. Pray, how is that?

Sir Luke. Ay, do, Mr Twineall, teach my wife to do without words, and I shall be very much obliged to you: it will be a great accomplishment.—Even you, my lord, ought to be attentive to this fashion.

Twi. Why, madam, for instance; when a gentleman is asked a question which is either troublesome or improper to answer, he does not say he *won't* an-

swer it, even though he speaks to an inferior; but he says, "Really it appears to me e-e-e-e-e—[*Mutters and shrugs.*]—that is—mo-mo-mo-mo-mo—[*Mutters.*]—it you see the thing—for my part——te-te-te-te—and that's all I can tell about it at present."

Sir Luke. And you have told nothing.

Twi. Nothing upon earth.

Lady. But mayn't one guess what you mean?

Twi. O, yes—perfectly at liberty to guess.

Sir Luke. But I could never guess.

Twi. Again—when an impertinent pedant asks you a question which you know nothing about, and it may not be convenient to say so—you answer boldly, "Why really, sir, my opinion is, that the Greek poet—he-he-he-he—[*Mutters.*]—we-we-we-we—you see——if his ideas were—and if the Latin translator—mis-mis-mis-mis—[*Shrugs.*]——that I shou'd think—in my humble opinion—But the Doctor may know better than I."

Sir Luke. The Doctor must know very little else.

Twi. Or in case of a duel, where one does not care to say who was right, or who was wrong—you answer—"*This*, sir, is the state of the matter—Mr. F.—came first—te-te-te-te—on that—be-be-be-be—if the other—in short—[*Whispers.*]—whis-whis-whis-whis"——

Sir Luke. What?

Twi. "There, now you have it—there it is: but don't say it came from me."

Lady. Why, you have not told a word of the story!

Twi. But that your auditor must not say to you—that's not the fashion—he may say—"You have not made yourself perfectly clear;"—or, he may say—"He must have the matter more particularly pointed out somewhere else;"—but that is all the auditor can say with good breeding.

Lady. A very pretty method indeed to satisfy curiosity!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Haswell.

Sir Luke. This is a countryman of ours, Mr. Twineall, and a most worthy man I assure you.

Enter MR. HASWELL.

Sir Luke. Mr. Haswell, how do you do? [*Warmly.*

Hasw. Sir Luke, I am glad to see you.——Lady Tremor, how do you do? [*He bows to the rest.*

Lady. O, Mr. Haswell, I am extremely glad you are come—here is a young adventurer just arrived from England, who has been giving us such a strange account of all that's going on there!

[*Introducing* TWINEALL.

Hasw. Sir, you are welcome to India.

[SIR LUKE *whispers* HASWELL.

Indeed!—*his* son.

Lady. Do, Mr. Haswell, talk to him—he can give you much information.

Hasw. [*Goes up to* TWINEALL.] Mr. Twineall, I have the honour of knowing your father extremely well—he holds his seat in parliament still, I presume?

Twi. He does, sir.

Hasw. And your uncle, Sir Charles?

Twi. Both, sir—both in parliament still.

Hasw. Pray, has any act in behalf of the poor clergy taken place?

Twi. In behalf of the poor clergy, sir?—I'll tell you—I'll tell you, sir.—As to that act—concerning—[*Shrugs and mutters.*]—em-em-em-em—the Committee—em-em—ways and means—hee-hee—te-te-te—[SIR LUKE, LADY, *and* LORD FLINT *laugh.*] My father and my uncle both think so, I assure you.

Hasw. Think how, sir?

Sir Luke. Nay, that's not good breeding—you must ask no more questions.

Hasw. Why not?

Sir Luke. Because—we-we-we-we—[*Mimicks.*]—he knows nothing about the matter.

Haw. What!—not know?

Twi. Yes, sir, perfectly acquainted with every thing that passes in the House—but, I assure you, that when parliamentary business is reported——By the bye, Sir Luke, permit me, in my turn, to make a few inquiries concerning the state of this country.

[SIR LUKE *starts, and fixes his Eyes suspiciously on* LORD FLINT.

Sir Luke. Why, one does not like to speak much about the country one lives in.—But, Mr. Haswell, you have been visiting our encampments: you may tell us what is going on there.

Lady. Pray, Mr. Haswell, is it true that the Sultan cut off the head of one of his wives the other day because she said to him—"I won't?"

Sir Luke. Do, my dear, be silent.

Lady. I won't.

Sir Luke. O, that the Sultan had you instead of me!

Lady. And with my head off, I suppose?

Sir Luke. No, my dear; in that state, I shou'd have no objection to you myself.

Lady. [*Aside to* SIR LUKE.] Now, I'll frighten you ten times more.—But, Mr. Haswell, I am told there are many persons suspected of disaffection to the present Sultan, who have been lately, arrested, and sold to slavery, by his orders, though there was no evidence produced of their guilt.

Haw. In a government such as this, the charge is quite sufficient.

Sir Luke. [*In apparent Alarm, wishing to turn the Discourse.*] Well, my lord, and how does your lordship find yourself this afternoon?—this morning, I mean. Bless me! why I begin to be as forgetful as your lordship. [*Smiling and bowing.*

Lady. How I pity the poor creatures!

Sir Luke. [*Aside to* LADY.] Take care what you say before that tool of state: look at him, and tremble for your life.

Lady. Look at him, and tremble for your own.—And so, Mr. Haswell, all this is true?—and some persons of family too, I am told, dragged from their homes, and sent to slavery merely on suspicion?

Hasw. Yet, less do I pity those, than some, whom prisons and dungeons, crammed before, are yet prepared to receive.

Lord. Mr. Haswell, such is the Sultan's pleasure.

Sir Luke. Will your lordship take a turn in the garden: it looks from this door very pleasant. Does not it, my lord?

Lady. But pray, Mr. Haswell, has not the Sultan sent for you to attend at his palace this morning?

Hasw. He has, madam.

Lady. There! I heard he had, but Sir Luke said not.—I am told he thinks himself under the greatest obligations to you.

Hasw. The report has flattered me: but if his highness *shou'd* think himself under obligations, I can readily point a way by which he may acquit himself of them.

Lady. In the mean time, I am sure you feel for those poor sufferers.

Hasw. [*With stifled Emotion.*] Sir Luke, good morning to you.—I call'd upon some trifling business, but I have out-staid my time, and therefore I'll call again in a couple of hours.—Lady Tremor, good morning—my lord—Mr. Twineall.— [*Bows, and exit.*

Tai. Sir Luke, your garden *does* look so divinely beautiful—

Sir Luke. Come, my lord, will you take a turn in it?—Come, Mr. Twineall—come my dear—[*Taking her Hand.*], I can't think what business Mr. Haswell

has to speak to me upon!—for my part, I am quite a plain man, and busy myself about no one's affairs, except my own—but I dare say your lordship has forgotten all we have been talking about.

Lord. If you permit me, Sir Luke, I'll hand Lady Tremor.

Sir Luke. Certainly, my lord, if you please—Come, Mr. Twineall, I'll conduct you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR LUKE TREMOR'S.

Enter TWINEALL *and* MEANRIGHT.

Twi. My dear friend, after so long a separation, how unlucky that you shou'd, on the very day of my arrival, be going to set sail for another part of the world! yet, before you go, I must beg a favour of you.—You know Sir Luke Tremor and his family perfectly well, I dare say?

Mean. I think so—I have been in his house near six years.

Twi. The very person on earth I wanted!—Sir Luke has power here, I suppose?—a word from him might do a man some service perhaps? [*Significantly.*

Mean. Why, yes; I don't know any one who has more influence at a certain place.

Twi. And Lady Tremor seems a very comprehensive woman.

Mean. Very.

Twi. And I have a notion they think well of me.

Mean. I dare say they do.

Twi. Yes—but I mean *very* well.

Mean. No doubt!

Twi. But, my dear friend, you must help me to make them think better of me still—and when my fortune is made, I'll make yours—for when I once become acquainted with people's dispositions, their little weaknesses, foibles, and faults, I can wind, twist, twine, and get into a corner of every one's heart, and lie so snug, they can't know I'm there till they want to pull me out, and find 'tis impossible.

Mean. Excellent talent!

Twi. Is not it?—And now, my dear friend, do you inform me of the secret dispositions and propensities of every one in this family, and that of all their connexions?—What lady values herself upon one qualification, and what lady upon another?—What gentleman will like to be told of his accomplishments, or what man would rather hear of his wife's or his daughter's?—or of his horses, or of his dogs?—Now, my dear Ned, acquaint me with all this; and, within a fortnight, I will become the most necessary rascal—not a creature shall know how to exist without me.

Mean. Why, such a man as you ought to have made your fortune in England.

Twi. No; there—my father and my three uncles monopolized all the great men themselves, and would never introduce me where I was likely to become their rival.—This, this is the very spot for me to display my genius.—But then I must first penetrate into the minds of the inhabitants, unless you will kindly save me that trouble.—Come, give me all their cha-

racters—all their little propensities—all their whims—in short, all I am to praise, and all I am to avoid praising, in order to endear myself to them. [*Takes out Tablets.*] Come—begin with Sir Luke.

Mean. Sir Luke values himself more upon personal bravery, than upon any thing.

Twi. Thank you, my dear friend—thank you. [*Writes.*] Was he ever in the army?

Mean. Oh yes, besieged a capital fortress a few years ago: and now, the very name of a battle or a great general flatters his vanity; and he considers all the praises you lavish upon the subject as compliments to himself.

Twi. Thank you—thank you a thousand times. [*Writes.*] I'll mention a battle very soon.

Mean. Not directly.

Twi. O, no—let me alone for time and place.—Go on, my friend—go on—her ladyship—

Mean. Descended from the ancient kings of Scotland.

Twi. You don't say so!

Mean. And though she is so nicely scrupulous as never to mention the word genealogy, yet I have seen her agitation so great, when the advantages of high birth have been extoll'd, that she could scarcely withhold her sentiments of triumph; which, in order to disguise, she has assumed a disdain for all "vain titles, empty sounds, and idle pomp."

Twi. Thank you—thank you: this is a most excellent *trait* of the lady's. [*Writes.*] "Pedigree of the kings of Scotland?"—O, I have her at once.

Mean. Yet do it cautiously;—oblique touches, rather than open explanations.

Twi. Let me alone for the manner.

Mean. She has, I know, in her possession—but I dare say she would not show it you; nay, on the contrary, would affect to be highly offended, were you to

mention it;—and yet it certainly would please her to know you were acquainted with her having in her possession——

Twi. What—what—what is it?

Mean. A large old-fashioned wig—which Malcolm the Third or Fourth, her great ancestor, wore when he was crowned at Scone, in the year——

Twi. I'll mention it.

Mean. Take care.

Twi. O, let me alone for caution.

Mean. She'll pretend to be angry.

Twi. That I am prepared for.—Pray, who is my Lord Flint?

Mean. A deep man—and a great favourite at court.

Twi. Indeed!—how am I to please him?

Mean. By insinuations against the present Sultan.

Twi. Indeed!

Mean. With all his pretended attachment, his heart——

Twi. Are you sure of it?

Mean. Sure:—he blinds Sir Luke, who by the bye is no great politician—but I know his lordship; and if he thought he was certain of his ground—and he thinks, he shall be soon—then—

Twi. I'll insinuate myself, and join his party; but, in the mean time, preserve good terms with Sir Luke, in case any thing shou'd fall in my way there.—Who is Mr. Haswell?

Mean. He pretends to be a man of principle and sentiment;—flatter him on that.

Twi. The easiest thing in the world—no characters love flattery better than those: they will bear even to hear their vices praised.—You have mentioned no ladies yet, but the lady of the house.

Mean. I know little about any other, except a pretty girl who came over from England, about two years ago, for a husband; and, not succeeding in a

distant part of the country, was recommended to this house; and has been here three or four months.

Twi. O, I warrant I please her.

Mean. Yes—I believe you are skilled.

Twi. In the art of flattery, no one more.

Mean. Still, it is not a liberal art.

Twi. It is a great science, notwithstanding—and studied, at present, by all wise men.—'Sdeath, I have staid a long time—I can't attend to any more characters at present—Sir Luke and his lady will think me inattentive, if I don't join them.—Shall I see you again?—if not, I wish you a pleasant voyage—I'll make the most of what you have told me—you'll hear I'm a great man.—Heaven bless you!—good bye!—you'll hear I'm a great man. [*Exit.*

Mean. And, if I am not mistaken, I shall hear you are turned out of this house before to-morrow morning. O, Twineall! exactly the reverse of every character have you now before you.—The greatest misfortune in the life of Sir Luke has been, flying from his regiment in the midst of an engagement, and receiving a most humiliating degradation in consequence; which makes him so feelingly alive on the subject of a battle, that nothing but his want of courage can secure my friend Twineall's life for venturing to name one.—Then my Lord Flint, firmly attached to the interest of the Sultan, will be on fire when he hears of open disaffection.—But most of all, Lady Tremor! whose father was a draper, and her uncle a noted advertising "Periwig-maker on a new construction." She will run mad to hear of births, titles, and long pedigrees,—Poor Twineall! little dost thou think what is prepared for thee.—There is Mr. Haswell too! but to him have I sent you to be reclaimed—to him, who, free from faults, or even foibles, of his own, possesses still most powerfully—compassion for his neighbour's. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Inside of a Prison.

Several PRISONERS *dispersed in different Situations.*

Enter KEEPER *and* HASWELL, *with Lights.*

Keep. This way, sir: the prisons this way are more extensive still.—You seem to feel for those unthinking men: but they are a set of unruly people, whom no severity can make such as they ought to be.

Hasw. But wou'd not gentleness, or mercy, do you think, reclaim them?

Keep. That I can't say: we never make use of such means.—That man, yonder, suspected of treason, is sentenced to be here for life, unless his friends can lay down a large sum, by way of penalty; which he finds they cannot do, and so is turned melancholy.

Hasw. [*After a Pause.*] Who is that?

[*Pointing to another.*

Keep. He has been tried for heading an insurrection, and acquitted.

Hasw. What then keeps him here?

Keep. Fees due to the court—a debt contracted while he proved his innocence.

Hasw. Lead on, my friend—let us go to some other part. [*Putting his Hand to his Eyes.*

Keep. In the ward we are going to, are the prisoners who, by some small reserve of money, some little stock when they arrived, or by the bounty of some friends who visit them, or such like fortunate circumstance, are in a less dismal place.

Hasw. Lead on.

Keep. But stop—put on this cloak; for, before we arrive at the place I mention, we must pass through a damp vault, which to those who are not used to it—[HASWELL *puts on the Cloak.*] Or will you postpone your visit?

Haswell. No—go on.

Keep. Alas! who wou'd suppose you had been used to see such places!—you look concerned—grieved to see the people suffer.—I wonder you shou'd come, when you seem to think so much about them.

Haswell. O, that, that is the very reason!

[*Exit, following the* KEEPER.

[ZEDAN, *a tawny Indian Prisoner, follows them, stealing out, as if intent on something secret.—Two* PRISONERS *walk slowly down the Stage, looking after* HASWELL.

First Pris. Who is this man?

Second Pris. From Britain—I have seen him once before.

First Pris. He looks pale—he has no heart.

Second Pris. I believe, a pretty large one.

Re-enter ZEDAN.

Zedan. Brother, a word with you. [*To the* FIRST PRISONER; *the Other retires.*] As the stranger and our keeper passed by the narrow passage, a noxious vapour put out the light; and as they groped along, I purloined this from the stranger. [*Shews a Pocket-book.*] See, it contains two notes will pay our ransom.

[*Shewing the Notes.*

First Pris. A treasure—our certain ransom!

Zedan. Liberty! our wives, our children, and our friends, will these papers purchase.

First Pris. What a bribe for our Keeper! He may rejoice too.

Zedan. And then the pleasure it will be to hear the stranger fret, and complain for his loss!—O, how my heart loves to see sorrow!—Misery, such as I have

known, dealt to men who spurn me—who treat me as if, in my own island, I had no friends who loved me—no servants who paid me honour—no children who revered me.——Taskmasters, forgetful that I am a husband—a father—nay, a man.

First Pris. Conceal your thoughts—conceal your treasure too—or the Briton's complaint—

Zedan. Will be in vain.—Our Keeper will conclude part of the prize must come to him at last, and therefore make no great search for it.—Here, in the corner of my belt, [*Puts up the Pocket-book.*] 'twill be secure.—Come this way, and let us indulge our pleasant prospect. [*They retire, and the Scene closes.*

SCENE III.

Another Part of the Prison.

A Kind of Sofa, with an OLD MAN *sleeping upon it—*
ELVIRUS *sitting attentively by him.*

Enter KEEPER *and* HASWELL.

Keep. That young man, watching his aged father as he sleeps, by the help of fees gains his admission; and he never quits the place, except to go and purchase cordials for the old man, who, though healthy and strong, when he was first a prisoner, is now become languid and indisposed.

Hasw. Are they from Europe?

Keep. No—but descended from Europeans. See how the youth holds his father's hand!—I have sometimes caught him bathing it with tears.

Hasw. I'll speak to the young man.

[*Going to him.*

Keep. He will speak as soon as he sees me—he has

sent a petition to the Sultan, about his father, and never fails to inquire if a reply is come.

[*They approach*—ELVIRUS *starts, and comes forward.*

Elvir. [*To* HASWELL.] Sir, do you come from court?—Has the Sultan received my humble supplication, can you tell?——Softly!—let not my father hear you speak.

Hasw. I come but as a stranger, to see the prison.

Elvir. No answer yet, Keeper?

Keep. No—I told you it was in vain to implore: they never read petitions sent from prison—their hearts are hardened to such worn-out tales of sorrow.

[ELVIRUS *turns towards his* FATHER, *and weeps.*

Hasw. Pardon me, sir—but what is the request you are thus denied?

Elvir. Behold my father! But three months has he been confined here; and yet, unless he breathes a purer air—O, if you have influence at court, sir, pray represent what passes in this dreary habitation—what passes in my heart.——My supplication is, to remain a prisoner here, while my father, released, shall retire to his paternal estate, and never more take arms against the present government, but at the peril of my life.—Or, if the Sultan would allow me to serve him as a soldier—

Hasw. You would fight against the party your father fought for?

Elvir. [*Starting.*] No—but in the forests, or on the desert sands, amongst those slaves who are sent to battle against the wild Indians, I wou'd go—and earn the boon I ask——Or in the mines——

Hasw. Give me your name: I will, at least, present your suit—and, perhaps—

Elvir. Sir! do you think it is likely?—Joyful hearing!

Hasw. Nay, be not too hasty in your hopes—I cannot answer for my success. [*Repeats.*] "Your fa-

ther humbly implores to be released from prison; and, in his stead, *you* take his chains: or, for the Sultan's service, fight as a slave, or dig in the mines?"

Elvir. Exactly, sir—that is the petition—I thank you, sir.

Keep. You don't know, young man, what it *is* to dig in mines—or fight against foes, who make their prisoners die by unheard-of tortures.

Elvir. *You* do not know, sir, what it *is*—to see a parent suffer.

Hasw. [*Writing.*] Your name?

Elvir. Elvirus Casimir.

Hasw. Your father's?

Elvir. The same—one who followed agriculture in the fields of Symria; but, induced by the call of freedom——

Hasw. How?—Have a care.

Elvir. I thank you—his son, by the cry of nature, supplicates his freedom.

Keep. The rebel, you find, breaks out.

Elvir. [*Aside to the* KEEPER.] Silence! silence! he forgives it.—Don't remind him—don't undo my hopes.

Hasw. I will serve you, if I can.

Elvir. And I will merit your favour, indeed I will.—You shall not complain of me—I will be—

Hasw. Retire—I trust you.

[ELVIRUS *bows, and retires.*

Keep. Yonder cell contains a female prisoner.

Hasw. A female prisoner!

Keep. Without a friend or comforter, she has existed there these many years—nearly fifteen.

Hasw. Is it possible!

Keep. Wou'd you wish to see her?

Hasw. If it won't give her pain.

Keep. At least, she'll not resent it—for she seldom complains, except in moans to herself.—[*Goes to the*

Cell.] Lady, here is one come to visit all the prisoners —please to appear before him.

Hasw. I thank you—you speak with reverence and respect to her.

Keep. She has been of some note, though now totally unfriended—at least we think she has, from her gentle manners; and our governor is in the daily expectation of some liberal ransom for her: this makes her imprisonment without hope of release, till that day arrives.—[*Going to the Cell.*] Take my hand—you are weak.

[*He leads her from the Cell—she appears faint, and as if the Light affected her Eyes*—HASWELL *takes off his Hat, and, after a Pause*—

Hasw. I fear you are not in health, lady?

[*She looks at him solemnly for some Time.*

Keep. Speak, madam—speak.

Pris. No—not very well. [*Faintly.*

Hasw. Where are your friends? When do you expect your ransom?

Pris. [*Shaking her Head.*] Never.

Keep. She persists to say so; thinking, by that declaration, we shall release her without a ransom.

Hasw. Is that your motive?

Pris. I know no motive for a falsehood.

Hasw. I was to blame—pardon me.

Keep. Your answers are somewhat more proud than usual. [*He retires up the Stage.*

Pris. They are.—[*To* HASWELL.] Forgive me—I am mild with all these people—but from a countenance like yours—I could not bear reproach.

Hasw. You flatter me.

Pris. Alas! and what have I to expect from such a meanness?—You do not come to ransom me.

Hasw. Perhaps I do.

Pris. Oh! do not say so—unless—unless—I am not to be deceived. Pardon in your turn this suspicion: but when I have so much to hope for—when

the sun, the air, fields, woods, and all that wondrous world wherein I have been so happy, is in prospect —forgive me, if the vast hope makes me fear.

Hasw. Unless your ransom is fixed at a price beyond my power to give, I *will* release you.

Pris. Release me!—Benevolent!

Hasw. How shall I mark you down in my petition? [*Takes out his Book.*] What name?

Pris. 'Tis almost blotted from my memory. [*Weeping.*

Keep. It is of little note—a female prisoner, taken with the rebel party, and in these cells confined for fifteen years.

Pris. During which time I have demeaned myself with all humility to my governors: neither have I distracted my fellow-prisoners with a complaint that might recall to their memory their own unhappy fate. I have been obedient, patient; and cherished hope to cheer me with vain dreams, while despair possessed my reason.

Hasw. Retire—I will present the picture you have given.

Pris. And be successful—or, never let me see you more. [*She goes up the Stage.*

Hasw. So it shall be.

Pris. [*Returns.*] Or, if you shou'd miscarry in your views—for who forms plans that do not sometimes fail?—I will not reproach you even to myself.—— No—nor will I suffer much from the disappointment —merely that you may not have what I suffer, to account for. [*Exit to her Cell.*

Hasw. Excellent mind!

Keep. In this cell— [*Going to another.*

Hasw. No—take me away: I have enough to do for those unhappy captives I have seen—I dare not see more at present. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The former Prison Scene.

Enter ZEDAN.

Zedan. They are coming.—I'll stand here in his sight, that, shou'd he miss what I have taken, he may not suspect me to be the robber, but suppose it is one who has hid himself.

Enter KEEPER *and* HASWELL.

Keep. [*To* ZEDAN.] What makes you here?—still moping by yourself, and lamenting for your family? [*To* HASWELL.] That man, the most ferocious I ever met with, laments, sometimes even with tears, the separation from his wife and children.

Hasw. [*Going to him.*] I am sorry for you, friend: [ZEDAN *looks sullen and morose.*] I pity you.

Keep. Yes, he had a pleasant hamlet on the neighbouring island: plenty of fruits, clear springs, and wholesome roots; and now complains bitterly of his repasts—sour rice, and muddy water.

[*Exit* KEEPER.

Hasw. Poor man! bear your sorrows nobly.—And, as we are alone, no miserable eye to grudge the favour —[*Looking round.*] take this trifle— [*Gives Money.*] it will, at least, make your meals better for a few short weeks, till Heaven may please to favour you with a less sharp remembrance of the happiness you have lost.—Farewell. [*Going.*

[ZEDAN *catches hold of him, and taking the Pocket-book from his Belt, puts it into* HASWELL'S *Hand.*

Hasw. What's this?

Zedan. I meant it should gain me my liberty—but I will not vex you.

Hasw. How came you by it.

Zedan. Stole it—and wou'd have stabb'd you, had you been alone—but I am glad I did not—Oh, I am glad I did not!

Hasw. You like me then?

Zedan. [*Shakes his Head, and holds his Heart.*] 'Tis something that I never felt before—it makes me like not only you, but all the world besides.—The love of my family was confined to them alone—but this sensation makes me love even my enemies.

Hasw. O, nature! grateful! mild! gentle! and forgiving!—worst of tyrants they, who, by hard usage, drive you from men's breasts.

Re-enter KEEPER.

Keep. The lights are ready, sir, through the dark entry. [*To* ZEDAN.] Go to your fellows.

Hasw. [*To* ZEDAN.] Farewell—we will meet again.

[*Exit* ZEDAN *on one Side; exeunt* HASWELL *and* KEEPER *on the other.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR LUKE TREMOR'S.

Enter SIR LUKE *and* AURELIA.

Sir Luke. Why, then, Aurelia, (though I never mentioned it to my Lady Tremor) my friend wrote

me word he had reason to suppose your affections were improperly fixed upon a young gentleman in that neighbourhood; and this was his reason for wishing you to leave that place to come hither; and this continual dejection convinces me my friend was not mistaken.—Answer me—can you say he was?

Aure. Sir Luke, candidly to confess—

Sir Luke. Nay, no tears—why in tears? for a husband?—be comforted—we'll get you one ere long, I warrant.

Aure. Dear, Sir Luke, how can you imagine I am in tears because I have not a husband, while you see Lady Tremor every day in tears for the very opposite cause?

Sir Luke. No matter; women like to have a husband through pride; and I have known a woman marry, from that very motive, even a man she has been ashamed of.

Aure. Perhaps Lady Tremor married from pride.

Sir Luke. Yes—and I'll let her know that pride is painful.

Aure. But, sir, her ladyship's philosophy—

Sir Luke. She has no philosophy.

Enter LADY TREMOR *and* TWINEALL.

Sir Luke. Where is my Lord Flint? What have you done with him?

Lady. He's speaking a word to Mr. Meanright, about his passport to England—Did you mean me, Sir Luke, who has no philosophy?—I protest, I have a great deal.

Sir Luke. When did you ever show it?

Lady. When the servant at my Lady Grissel's threw a whole urn of boiling water upon your feet.—Did I then give any proof of female weakness? did I faint, scream, or even shed a tear?

Sir Luke. No, but while I was in agonies you were holding a smelling bottle to the lady of the house begging of her not to make herself uneasy, "for that the accident was of no manner of consequence."

Aure. Dear sir, don't be angry: I am sure her ladyship spoke as she thought.

Sir Luke. I suppose she did.

Aure. I mean— she thought the accident might be easily——She thought you might be easily recovered.

Lady. No, indeed, I did not: but I thought Sir Luke had frequently charged me with the want of patience; and, that moment, the very thing in the world I cou'd have wish'd occurred, on purpose to give me an opportunity to prove his accusation false.

Sir Luke. Very well, madam—but did not the whole company censure your behaviour? did not they say, it was not the conduct of a wife?

Lady. Only our particular acquaintance cou'd say so; for the rest of the company, I am sure, did not take me to be your wife—Thank Heaven, our appearances never betray that secret.

Sir Luke. That day, in particular, they might not for I remember you had been no less than three hours at your toilet.

Aure. And, indeed, Sir Luke, if you were to use milk of roses, and several other things of the same kind, you can't think how much more like a fine gentleman you wou'd look.—Such things as these make, almost, all the difference between you and such a man as Mr. Twineall.

Twi. No, pardon me, madam—a face like mine may use these things; but in Sir Luke's they would entirely destroy that fine martial appearance—[SIR LUKE *looks confounded.*]—which women, as well as men, admire—for as valour is the first ornament of our sex——

Lady. What are you saying, Mr. Twineall?—[*Aside.*] I'll keep him on this subject if I can.

Twi. I was going to observe, madam, that the reputation of a general—which puts me in mind, Sir Luke, of an account I read of a battle——

[*He crosses over to* SIR LUKE, *who turns up the Stage, in the utmost Confusion, and steals out of the Room.*

Lady. Well, sir—go on, go on—you were going to introduce——

Twi. A battle, madam—but Sir Luke is gone!

Lady. Never mind that, sir: he generally runs away on these occasions.

Sir Luke. [*Coming back.*] What were you saying, Aurelia, about a husband?

Lady. She did not speak.

Sir Luke. To be sure, ladies in India do get husbands very soon.

Twi. Not always, I am told, Sir Luke——Women of family, [*Firing his Eyes stedfastly on* LADY TREMOR.] indeed, may soon enter into the matrimonial state—but the rich men in India, we are told in England, are grown of late very cautious with whom they marry; and there is not a man of any repute that will now make a woman his wife, unless she be descended from a good family.

[*Looking at* LADY TREMOR, *who walks up the Stage, and steals out of the Room, just as* SIR LUKE *had done before.*

Sir Luke. I am very sorry—very sorry to say, Mr. Twineall, that has not been always the case.

Twi. Then I am very sorry too, Sir Luke; for it is as much impossible that a woman, who is not born of an ancient family, can be——

[LADY TREMOR *returns.*

Sir Luke. That is just what I say—they *cannot* be——

Lady. Sir Luke, let me tell you——

Sir Luke. It does not signify telling, my dear—you have proved it.

Lady. [*To* TWINEALL.] Sir, let me tell *you*—

Twi. O! O! my dear madam, 'tis all in vain—there is no such thing—it can't be—there is no pleading against conviction—a person of low birth must, in every particular, be a terrible creature.

Sir Luke. [*Going to her.*] A terrible creature! a terrible creature!

Lady. Here comes my Lord Flint—I'll appeal to him.

Enter LORD FLINT.

Sir Luke. [*Going to him.*] My lord, I was saying, as a proof that our great Sultan, who now fills the throne, is no impostor, as the rebel party wou'd insinuate, no low-born man, but of the royal stock, his conduct palpably evinces—for, had he not been nobly born, we shou'd have beheld the plebeian peeping forth upon all occasions—[*Looking at* LADY TREMOR.]—and plebeian manners who can support!

Lady. Provoking! [*Goes up the Stage.*

Lord. Sir Luke, is there a doubt of the Emperor's birth and title? he is the real Sultan, depend upon it: it surprises me to hear you talk with the smallest uncertainty.

Twi. Indeed, Sir Luke, I wonder at it too: [*Aside to* LORD FLINT.] and yet, my lord, I have my doubts. [LORD FLINT *starts.*

Sir Luke. I, my lord? far be it from me! I was only saying what other people have said; for my part, *I* never harboured a doubt of the kind.—[*Aside.*] My head begins to nod, only for that word—Pray Heaven, I may die with it on!—I shou'd not like to lose my head; nor shou'd I like to die by a bullet—nor by a sword; and a cannon ball wou'd be as disagreeable as any thing I know.—It is very strange that I never yet could make up my mind

in what manner I shou'd like to go out of the world.

[*During this Speech,* TWINEALL *is paying Court to* LORD FLINT—*they come forward, and* SIR LUKE *retires.*

Lord. Your temerity astonishes me!

Twi. I must own, my lord, I feel somewhat awkward in saying it to your lordship—but my own heart, my own conscience, my own sentiments—they *are* my own; and they are dear to me.—So it is—the Sultan does not appear to me—[*With Significance.*]—that great man some people think him.

Lord. Sir, you astonish me—Pray, what is your name? I have forgotten it.

Twi. Twineall, my lord—the Honourable Henry Twineall—your lordship does me great honour to ask.—Landed this morning from England, as your lordship may remember, in the ship Mercury, my lord; and all the officers on board speaking with the highest admiration and warmest terms of your lordship's official character.

Lord. Why, then, Mr. Twineall, I am very sorry—

Twi. And so am I, my lord, that your sentiments and mine shou'd so far disagree, as I know they do.—I am not unacquainted with your firm adherence to the Sultan, but I am unused to disguise my thoughts—I cou'd not, if I wou'd. I have no little views, no sinister motives, no plots, no intrigues, no schemes of preferment; and I verily believe, that, if a pistol was now directed to my heart, or a large pension to my pocket (in the first case at least), I shou'd speak my mind.

Lord. [*Aside.*] A dangerous young man! and I may make something of the discovery.

Twi. [*Aside.*] It tickles him to the soul, I find.—My lord, now I begin to be warm on the subject, I feel myself quite agitated; and, from the intelligence which I have heard, even when I was in England—

there is every reason to suppose——exm—exm—exm— [*Mutters.*

Lord. What, sir? what?

Twi. You ſhderstand me.

Lord. No—explain.

Twi. Why, then, there is every reason to suppose—some people are not what they should be—pardon my suspicions, if they are wrong.

Lord. I *do* pardon your thoughts, with all my heart—but your words, young man, you must answer for. [*Aside.*]—Lady Tremor, good morning.

Twi. [*Aside.*] He is going to ruminate on my sentiments.

Lady. Shall we have your lordship's company in the evening? Mr. Haswell will be here; if your lordship has no objection?

Sir Luke. How do you know Mr. Haswell will be here?

Lord. Because he has just called, in his way to the palace, and said so: and he has been telling us some of the most interesting stories!

Sir Luke. Of his morning visits, I suppose—I heard Meanright say, he saw him very busy.

Lady. Sir Luke and I dine out, my lord; but we shall return early in the evening.

Lord. I will be here, without fail.—Sir Luke, a word with you, if you please—[*They come forward.*]—Mr. Twincall has taken some very improper liberties with the Sultan's name, and I must make him account for them.

Sir Luke. My lord, you are extremely welcome—[*Trembling.*]—to do whatever your lordship pleases with any one belonging to me, or to my house—but I hope your lordship will pay some regard to the master of it.

Lord. O! great regard to the master—and to the mistress also.—But for that gentleman——

Sir Luke. Do what your lordship pleases.

Lord. I will—and I will make him—

Sir Luke. If your lordship does not forget it.

Lord. I sha'n't forget it, Sir Luke—I have a very good memory when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord—I never did doubt it.

Lord. And I can be very severe, Sir Luke, when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord—I never did doubt it.

Lord. You may depend upon seeing me here in the evening; and then you shall find I have not threatened more than I mean to perform.—Good morning.

Sir Luke. Good morning, my lord—I don't in the least doubt it. [*Exit* LORD FLINT.

Lady. [*Coming forward with* TWINEALL.] For Heaven's sake, Mr. Twineall, what has birth to do with——

Twi. It has to do with every thing,—even with beauty;—and I wish I may suffer death, if a woman, with all the personal and mental accomplishments of the finest creature in the world, wou'd, to me, be of the least value, if lowly born.

Sir Luke. I sincerely wish every man who visits here was of the same opinion.

Aure. For shame, Mr. Twineall! persons of mean birth ought not to be despised for what it was not in their power to prevent; and, if it is a misfortune, you should consider them only as objects of pity.

Twi. And so I do pity them—and so I do—most sincerely—Poor creatures!

[*Looking on* LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. Aye, now he has atoned most properly.

Lady. Mr. Twineall, let me tell you——

Sir Luke. My dear Lady Tremor—[*Taking her aside.*]—let him alone—let him go on—there is something preparing for him he little expects—so let the

poor man say and do what he pleases for the present—it won't last long, for he has offended my Lord Flint; and I dare say his lordship will be able, upon some account or another, to get him imprisoned for life.

Lady. Imprisoned!—Why not take off his head at once?

Sir Luke. Well, my dear, I am sure I have no objection; and I dare say my lord will have it done, to oblige you.—I must make friends with her to keep mine safe. [*Aside.*

Lady. Do you mean to take him out to dinner with us?

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, if you approve of it, for I have already invited him—not else.

Lady. You are become extremely polite.

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, his lordship has taught me to be polite.——Mr. Twincall, Lady Tremor and I, are going to prepare for our visit, and I will send a servant to show you to your apartment, to dress; if you chuse to favour us with your company.

Twi. Certainly, Sir Luke, I shall do myself the honour.

Lady. Come this way, Aurelia; I can't bear to look at him. [*Exit with* AURELIA.

Sir Luke. Nor I to think of him. [*Exit.*

Twi. If I have not settled my business in this family, I am mistaken: they seem but of one opinion about me—Devilish clever fellow!—I am the man to send into the world—such a volatile, good-looking scoundrel too, that no one suspects me.——To be sure, I am under some few *obligations to my friend* for giving me the different characters of the family; and yet I don't know whether I am obliged to him or not; for if he had not made me acquainted with them, I should soon have had the skill to find them out myself.—No: I will not think my-

self under any obligation to him—it is very inconvenient for a gentleman to be under obligations.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Palace.

The SULTAN *discovered, with* GUARDS *and* OFFICERS *attending.*

HASWELL *is conducted in by an* OFFICER.

Sult. Englishman, you were invited hither to receive public thanks for our troops restored to health by your prescriptions.—Ask a reward adequate to your services.

Hasw. Sultan, the reward I ask, is, leave to preserve more of your people still.

Sult. How more? my subjects are in health: no contagion visits them.

Hasw. The prisoner is your subject. There, misery, more contagious than disease, preys on the lives of hundreds: sentenced but to confinement, their doom is death. Immured in damp and dreary vaults, they daily perish; and who can tell but that, among the many hapless sufferers, there may be hearts bent down with penitence to Heaven and you for every slight offence—there may be some, among the wretched multitude, even innocent victims. Let me seek them out—let me save them and you.

Sult. Amazement! retract your application: curb this weak pity; and accept our thanks.

Hasw. Restrain my pity?—and what can I receive in recompense for that soft bond which links me to the wretched? and, while it soothes their sorrow, repays me more, than all the gifts an empire could be-

stow.——But, if it be a virtue repugnant to your plan of government, I apply not in the name of pity, but of justice.

Sult. Justice!

Hasw. The justice which forbids all, but the worst of criminals, to be denied that wholesome air the very brute creation freely takes.

Sult. Consider for whom you plead—for men (if not base culprits), so misled, so depraved, they are dangerous to our state, and deserve none of its blessings.

Hasw. If not upon the undeserving—if not upon the wretched wanderer from the paths of rectitude,—where shall the sun diffuse his light, or the clouds distil their dew? Where shall spring breathe fragrance, or autumn pour its plenty?

Sult. Sir, your sentiments, still more your character, excite my curiosity. They tell me, that in our camps you visited each sick man's bed, administered yourself the healing draught, encouraged our savages with the hope of life, or pointed out their better hope in death.——The widow speaks your charities, the orphan lisps your bounties, and the rough Indian melts in tears to bless you.—I wish to ask why you have done all this?—What is it that prompts you thus to befriend the miserable and forlorn?

Hasw. In vain for me to explain:—the time it wou'd take to reveal to you—

Sult. Satisfy my curiosity in writing then.

Hasw. Nay, if you will read, I'll send a book in which is already written why I act thus.

Sult. What book?—What is it called?

Hasw. "The Christian Doctrine." (HASWELL *bows here with the utmost Reverence.*] There you will find—all I have done was but my duty.

Sult. [*To the* GUARDS.] Retire, and leave me alone with the stranger. [*All retire except* HASWELL *and the* SULTAN—*They come forward.*] Your words

reeal reflections that distract me; nor can I bear the pressure on my mind, without confessing—I am a Christian.

Hasw. A Christian!—What makes you thus assume the apostate?

Sult. Misery and despair.

Hasw. What made you a Christian?

Sult. My Arabella, a lovely European, sent hither in her youth, by her mercenary parents, to sell herself to the prince of all these territories. But 'twas my happy lot, in humble life, to win her love, snatch her from his expecting arms, and bear her far away; where, in peaceful solitude we lived, till, in the heat of the rebellion against the late Sultan, I was forced from my happy home to take a part.—I chose the imputed rebels side, and fought for the young aspirer. —An arrow, in the midst of the engagement, pierced his heart; and his officers, alarmed at the terror this stroke of fate might cause among their troops, urged me (as I bore a strong resemblance to him), to counterfeit a greater still, and show myself to the soldiers as their king recovered. I yielded to their suit, because it gave me ample power to avenge the loss of my Arabella, who had been taken from her home by the merciless foe, and barbarously murdered.

Hasw. Murdered!

Sult. I learnt so, and my fruitless search to find her has confirmed the intelligence. Frantic for her loss, I joyfully embraced a scheme which promised vengeance on the enemy:—it 'prospered; and I revenged my wrongs and hers with such unsparing justice on the opposite army and their king; that even the men, who made me what I am, trembled to reveal their imposition; and for their interest still continue it.

Hasw. Amazement!

Sult. Nay, they fill my prisons every day w wretches, who but whisper I am not their real S tan. The secret, therefore, I myself boldly rela in private: the danger is to him who speaks it again and, with this caution, I trust it is safe with you.

Hasw. It was, without that caution.—Now hea my answer to your tale:—Involved in deeds, in cru ties, at which your better thoughts revolt, the mean est wretch your camps and prisons hold, claims mo half the compassion *you* have excited. Permit m then, to be your comforter.

Sult. Impossible!

Hasw. In the most fatal symptoms, I have und taken the body's cure. To the mind's disease, per haps, I'm not less a stranger. Oh! trust the nob patient to my care.

Sult. What medicine will you apply?

Hasw. Lead you to behold the wretched in their misery, and then show you yourself in their d liverer.——I have your promise for a boon—'tis this:—give me the liberty of six whom I shall name now in confinement, and be yourself a witness of their enlargement.——See joy lighted in th countenance where sorrow still has left its rough remains—behold the tear of rapture chase away that of anguish—hear the faltering voice, long used to lamentation, in broken accents, utter thanks and blessings!—Behold this scene, and if y find the prescription ineffectual, dishonour your phy sician.

Sult. I will make trial of it.

Hasw. Come, then, to the Governor's house this very night,—into that council-room so often perverted to the use of the torture; and there (unknown to those released, as their king), you shall be witness t all which the grateful heart can dictate, and feel a that benevolence can enjoy.

Sult. I will meet you there.

Haxw. In the evening?

Sult. At ten precisely.—Guards, conduct the stranger from the palace. [*Exit* SULTAN.

Haxw. Thus far advanced, what changes may not be hoped for! [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR LUKE TREMOR'S.

Enter ELVIRUS *and* AURELIA.

Elvir. Oh, my Aurelia! since the time I first saw you—since you left the pleasant spot where I first beheld you—what distress, what anguish have we known!

Aure. Your family?

Elvir. Yes; and that caused the silence which I hope you have lamented. I could not wound you with the recital of our misfortunes: and now, only with the sad idea that I shall never see you more, am I come—to take my last farewell.

Aure. Is there a chance that we may never meet again?

Elvir. There is; and I sincerely hope it may prove so.—To see you again, wou'd be again to behold my father pining in misery.

Aure. Explain—[*A loud Rapping at the Door.*] That is Sir Luke and Lady Tremor—What shall I say,

shou'd they come into this room?—They suspect I correspond with some person in the country—What shall I tell them you are? upon what business can I say you are come?

Elvir. To avoid all suspicion of my real situation and to ensure admittance, I put on this habit, and told the servant, when I inquired for you, I was just arrived from England.—[*She starts.*]—Nay, it was but necessary I should conceal who I was in this suspicious place, or I might plunge a whole family the imputed guilt of mine.

Aure. Good Heaven!

Elvir. I feared, besides, there was no other means, no likelihood, to gain admission; and what, what wou'd I not have sacrificed, rather than have left you for ever without a last farewell? Think on these weighty causes, and pardon the deception.

Aure. But if I should be asked——

Elvir. Say as I have done.—My stay must be so short, it is impossible they shou'd detect me—for I must be back—

Aure. Where?

Elvir. No matter where—I must be back before the evening—and wish never to see you more.—I love you, Aurelia—O, how truly!—and yet there is a love more dear, more sacred still.

Aure. You torture me with suspense—Sir Luke is coming this way—What name shall I say if he asks me?

Elvir. Glanmore—I announced that name to the servant.

Aure. You tremble.

Elvir. The imposition hurts me; and I feel as if I dreaded a detection, though 'tis scarce possible. Sorrows have made a coward of me: even the servant, I thought, looked at me with suspicion, and I was both confounded and enraged.

Aure. Go into this apartment: I'll follow you.

[*Exit* ELVIRUS *at a Door.*

Sir Luke. [*Without.*] Abominable! provoking! impertinent! not to be borne!

Aure. [*Listening.*] Thank Heaven, Sir Luke is so perplexed with some affairs of his own, he may not think of mine. [*Exit to* ELVIRUS.

Enter SIR LUKE, *followed by* LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. I am out of all patience, and all temper—did you ever hear of such a complete impertinent coxcomb? Talk, talk, talk, continually! and referring to me on all occasions! "Such a man was a brave general—another a "great admiral;" and then he must tell a long story about a siege, and ask me if it did not make my bosom glow!

Lady. It had not that effect upon your face, for you were as white as ashes.

Sir Luke. But you did not see yourself while he was talking of grandfathers and great grandfathers;—I, you had—

Lady. I was not white, I protest.

Sir Luke. No—but you were as red as scarlet.

Lady. And you ought to have resented the insult, if you saw me affected by it.—Oh! some men wou'd have given him such a dressing!

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, if your uncle the frisseur had been alive, he wou'd have given him a dressing.

Lady. Sir Luke, none of your impertinence: you know I can't I won't bear it—neither will I wait for Lord Flint's resentment on Mr. Twincall.—No, I desire you will tell him to quit this roof immediately.

Sir Luke. My dear, you must excuse me—I can't think of quarrelling with a gentleman in my own house.

Lady. Was it your own house to-day at dinner when he insulted us? and would you quarrel then?

Sir Luke. No; that was a friend's house—and I make it a rule never to quarrel in my own house, a friend's house, in a tavern, or in the streets.

Lady. Well, then, I would quarrel in my own house, a friend's house, a tavern, or in the street, any one offended me.

Sir Luke. O, I have no doubt of it—no doubt, in the least.

Lady. But, at present, it shall be in my own house, and I will desire Mr. Twineall to quit it immediately.

Sir Luke. Very well, my dear—pray do.

Lady. I suppose, however, I may tell him, I have your authority to bid him go?

Sir Luke. Tell him I have no authority—none in the world over you—but that you will do as you please.

Lady. I can't tell him so—he won't believe it.

Sir Luke. Why not?—You tell me so, and make me believe it too.

Lady. Here the gentleman comes—Go away for a moment.

Sir Luke. With all my heart, my dear.

[*Going in a Hurry*

Lady. I'll give him a few hints, that he must either change his mode of behaviour, or leave us.

Sir Luke. That's right—but don't be too warm or if he should be very impertinent, or insolent—I hear Aurelia's voice in the next room—call her, and I dare say she'll come and take your part.

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Enter TWINEALL.

Twi. I positively could pass a whole day upon that stair-case—those reverend faces!—I presume they

are the portraits of some of your ladyship's illustrious ancestors?

Lady. Sir! Mr. Twincall—give me leave to tell you— [*In a violent Passion.*

Twi. The word illustrious, I find, displeases you. Pardon me—I did not mean to make use of so forcible an epithet. I know the delicacy of sentiment, which cannot bear the reflection that a few centuries only shou'd reduce from royalty one, whose dignified deportment seems to have been formed for that resplendent station.

Lady. The man is certainly mad!——Mr. Twincall——

Twi. Pardon me, madam: I own I am an enthusiast on these occasions. The dignity of blood—

Lady. You have too much, I am sure—do have a little taken from you.

Twi. Gladly wou'd I lose every drop that fills these plebeian veins, to be ennobled by the smallest—

Lady. Pray, sir, take up your abode in some other place.

Twi. Madam? [*Surprised.*

Lady. Your behaviour, sir—

Twi. If my friend had not given me an item of this I should think her downright angry. [*Aside.*

Lady. I can scarcely contain my rage at being so laugh'd at. [*Aside.*

Twi. I'll mention the wig: this is the time—[*Aside.*]—Perhaps you may resent it, madam: but there is a favour—

Lady. A favour, sir! Is this a time to ask a favour?

Twi. To an admirer of antiquity, as I am—

Lady. Antiquity again!

Twi. I beg pardon——but——a wig—

Lady. A what? [*Petrified.*

Twi. A wig. [*Bowing.*

Lady. Oh! oh! oh! [*Choking.*] this is not to be borne—this is too much—ah! ah! [*Sitting down,*

and going into Fits.] a direct, plain, palpable, and unequivocal attack upon my family, without evasion or palliative.—I can't bear it any longer.—Oh! oh!
[*Shrieking.*

Twi. Bless my soul, what shall I do?—what's the matter?

Sir Luke. [*Without.*] Maids! maids! go to your mistress—that good-for-nothing man is doing her a mischief.

Enter AURELIA.

Aure. Dear madam, what is the matter!

Enter SIR LUKE *and stands close to the Scene.*

Lady. Oh! oh! [*Crying.*

Sir Luke. How do you do now, my dear?

Twi. Upon my word, Sir Luke—

Sir Luke. O, sir, no apology—it does not signify—never mind it—I beg you won't put yourself to the trouble of an apology—it is of no kind of consequence.

Lady. What do you mean, Sir Luke? [*Recovered.*

Sir Luke. To show proper philosophy, my dear, under the affliction I feel for your distress.

Lady. [*To* AURELIA.] Take Twineall out of the room.

Aure. Mr. Twineall, her ladyship begs you'll leave the room till she is a little recovered.

Twi. Certainly.

[*Bows respectfully to* LADY TREMOR, *and exit with* AURELIA.

Sir Luke. I thought what you wou'd get by quarrelling,—fits—and tears.

Lady. And you know, Sir Luke, if you had quarrelled, you wou'd have been in the same situation. [*Rising from her Seat.*] But, Sir Luke, my dear Sir Luke, show yourself a man of courage but on this occasion.

Sir Luke. My dear, I wou'd do as much for you as I wou'd for my own life—but I cou'd not fight even to save that.

Enter LORD FLINT.

Lord. Lady Tremor, did the servant say you were very well, or very ill?

Lady. O, my lord, that insolent coxcomb, the Honourable Mr. Twineall—

Lord. I am very glad you put me in mind of him—I dare say I shou'd have forgotten else, not withstanding I came on purpose.

Lady. Forgot what?

Lord. A small piece of paper here: [*Pulling out a Parchment.*] but it will do a great deal.—Has he offended you?

Lady. beyond bearing.

Lord. I am glad of it, because it gives double pleasure to my vengeance.—He is a seditious person—boldly told me he doubted the Sultan's right to the throne—I have informed against him; and his punishment is left to my discretion. I may have him impriſoned, shot, sent to the gallies, or his head cut off—but which does your ladyship chuse?—Which ever you chuse is at your service. [*Bowing.*

Lady. [*Curtseying.*] O, they are all equally agreeable to me; which ever you please, my lord.

Sir Luke. What a deal of ceremony? how cool they are upon the subject!

Lord. And why not cool, sir? why not cool?

Sir Luke. O, very true—I am sure it has frozen me.

Lord. I will go instantly, for fear it shou'd slip my memory, and put this paper into the hands of proper officers. In the mean time, Sir Luke, if you can talk with your visitor, Mr. Twineall, do.—Inquire his opinion of the Sultan's rights—ask his thoughts, as if you were

commissioned by me—and, while he is revealing them to you, the officers shall be in ambush, surprise him in the midst of his sentiments, and bear him away to— [TWINEALL *looking in.*

Twi: May I presume to inquire how your ladyship does?

Lady. O, yes—and pray walk in—I am quite recovered.

Lord. Lady Tremor, I bid you good day for the present.

Sir Luke. [*Following him to the Door.*] Your lordship won't forget?

Lord. No—depend upon it, I shall remember.

Sir Luke. Yes—and make some other people remember too. [*Exit* LORD FLINT.

Twi. Is his lordship gone? I am very sorry.

Sir Luke. No—don't be uneasy, he'll soon come back.

Enter HASWELL.

Sir Luke. Mr. Haswell, I am glad to see you?

Hasw. I told Lady Tremor I would call in the evening, Sir Luke; and I have kept my word—I hoped to meet my Lord Flint here, as I have some business on which I want to speak to him; but he passed me at the door in such great haste he wou'd hardly allow me to ask him how he did—I hope your ladyship is well this afternoon.

[*Bows to* TWINEALL—SIR LUKE *goes off at the Door to* AURELIA *and* ELVIRUS.]

Twi. Pardon me, Mr. Haswell, but I almost suspect you heard of her ladyship's indisposition, and therefore paid this visit; for I am perfectly acquainted with your care and attention to all under affliction.

Hasw. [*Bows gravely.*] Has your ladyship been indisposed?

Lady. A little—but I am much better.

Twi. Surely, of all virtues, charity is the first! it so protects our neighbour!

Hasw. Do not you think, sir, that *patience* frequently protects him as much?

Twi. Dear sir—pity for the poor and miserable—

Hasw. Is oftener excited than the poor and miserable are aware of. [*Looking significantly at him.*

Sir Luke. [*From the Room where* AURELIA *and* ELVIRUS *are.*] Nay, sir, I beg you will walk into this apartment.—Aurelia, introduce the gentleman to Lady Tremor.

Lady. Who has she with her?

Hasw. Aurelia!—O! I have not seen her—I know not when: and, besides my acquaintance with her relations in England, there is a frank simplicity in her manners that has won my friendship.

Enter SIR LUKE, AURELIA, *and* ELVIRUS.

Sir Luke. You shou'd have introduced Mr. Glanmore before.—I assure you, sir, [*To* ELVIRUS.] I did not know, nor shou'd I have known, if I had not accidentally come into that room——

[HASWELL *starts, on seeing* ELVIRUS.

Sir Luke. [*To* LADY TREMOR.] A relation of Aurelia's—a Mr. Glanmore, my dear, just arrived from England; who has call'd to pass a few minutes with us before he sets off to the part of India where he is to reside. [ELVIRUS *and* AURELIA *appear in Confusion.*

Lady. I hope, sir, your stay with us will not be so short as Sir Luke has mentioned?

Elvir. Pardon me, madam, it must—The caravan, with which I travel, goes off this evening, and I must accompany it.

Hasw. [*Aside.*] I doubted my eyes: but his voice confirms me. [*Looking on* ELVIRUS.

Lady. Why, if you only arrived this morning, Mr. Glanmore, you came passenger in the same ship with Mr. Twineall?

Twi. No, madam.—Sir, I am very sorry we had not the pleasure of your company on board of us.

[*To* ELVIRUS.

Sir Luke. You had: Mr. Glanmore came over in the Mercury.—Did not you tell me so, sir?

[ELVIRUS *Bows.*

Twi. Bless my soul, sir! I beg your pardon: but surely that cannot be—I soon became acquainted with every soul on board of us—every creature—all their connexions—and I can scarcely suppose you were of the number.

Sir Luke. [*Aside.*] How impertinent he is to every body! O, that I had but courage to knock him down!

Elvir. [*To* TWINEALL.] Perhaps, sir—

Aure. Yes, I dare say, that was the case.

Twi. What was the case, madam?

Sir Luke. Wha—wha—wha—[*Mimics.*] that question is not good breeding.

Hasw. Why do you blush, Aurelia?

Aure. Because [*Hesitating.*]—this gentleman—— came over in the same ship with Mr. Twineall.

Sir Luke. And I can't say I wonder at your blushing.

Twi. Why there positively, sir, I thought I had known every passenger—and surely—

Lady. Mr. Twineall, your behaviour puts me out of all patience.—Did you not hear Mr. Glanmore say he came in the same vessel, and is not that sufficient?

Twi. Perfectly, madam—perfectly: but I thought there might be some mistake.

Elvir. And there is, sir: you find *you* are mistaken.

Lady. I thought so.—

Hasw. [*To* ELVIRUS.] And you *did* come in the same vessel?

Elvir. Sir, do you doubt it?

Hasw. Doubt it?

Elvir. Dare not doubt it.—[*Trembling and confused.*]

Hasw. Dare not?

Elvir. No sir; dare not. [*Violently.*

Aure. Oh, Heavens!

Sir Luke. [*To* AURELIA.] Come, my dear, you and I will get out of the way. [*Retiring with her.*

Lady. O dear!—for Heaven's sake!—Mr. Twineall, this is your doing.

Twi. Me, madam!——

Hasw. I beg the company's pardon—but [*To* ELVIRUS.] a single word with you, sir, if you please.

Lady. Dear Mr. Haswell—

Hasw. Trust my prudence and forbearance, madam—I will but speak a word in private to this gentleman.

[HASWELL *takes* ELVIRUS *down to the Bottom of the Stage—the Rest retire.*

Hasw. Are you, or are you not, an impostor?

Elvir. I am—I am—but do not you repeat my words—Do not *you* say it. [*Threatening.*

Hasw. What am I to fear?

Elvir. Fear *me*—I cannot lie with fortitude; but I can——Beware of me.

Hasw. I *will* beware of you, and so shall all my friends.

Elvir. Insolent, insulting man!—

[*With the utmost Contempt.*

LADY TREMOR *and the Rest come forward.*

Lady. Come, come, gentlemen, I hope you are now perfectly satisfied concerning this little misunderstanding—let us change the subject.—Mr. Haswell, have

you been successful before the Sultan for any of those poor prisoners you visited this morning?

Sir Luke. Aye; Meanright told me he saw you coming from them wrapt up in your long cloak; and he said he shou'd not have known you, if somebody had not said it was you.

[ELVIRUS *looks with Surprise, Confusion, and Repentance.*

Lady. But what success with the Sultan?

Haswe. He has granted me the pardon and freedom of any six whom I shall present as objects of his mercy.

Lady. I sincerely rejoice:—Then the youth and his father, whom you felt so much for, I am sure will be in the number of those who are to share your intercession.

[HASWELL *makes no Reply; and, after a Pause—*

Elvir. [*With the most supplicatory Tone and Manner.*] Sir—Mr. Haswell—O Heavens! I did not know you.

Sir Luke. Come, Mr. Haswell, this young man seems sorry he has offended you—forgive him.

Lady. Aye, do, Mr. Haswell.—Are you sorry, sir?

Elvir. Wounded to the heart—and, without his pardon, see nothing but despair.

Lady. Good Heavens!

Haswe. Sir Luke, my Lord Flint told me he was coming back directly. Pray inform him I had business elsewhere, and cou'd wait no longer. [*Exit.*

Elvir. O! I'm undone.

Lady. Follow him, if you have any thing to say.

Elvir. I dare not—I feel the terror of his just reproach.

Lady. Did you know him in England?

Aure. Dear madam, will you suffer me to speak a few words——

Sir Luke. [*Aside to* LADY TREMOR.] Leave her

and her relation together, and let us take a turn in the garden with Mr. Twineall.—I'm afraid his lordship will be back before we have drawn him to say any more on the subject, for which he is to be arrested.

Lady. You are right.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, will you walk this way?—that young lady and gentleman wish to have a little private conversation.

Twi. O, certainly, Sir Luke, by all means. [*Exeunt* SIR LUKE *and* LADY.]—[*To* ELVIRUS.] I am extremely sorry, sir, that you kept your bed during the voyage: I shou'd else have been most prodigiously happy in such good company. [*Exit.*

Aure. Why are you thus agitated? It was wrong to be so impetuous—but such regret as this is too much.

Elvir. Hear the secret I refused to tell you before—my father is a prisoner for life.

Aure. Oh, Heavens! then Mr. Haswell was the only man——

Elvir. And he had promised me—promised me, with benevolence, his patronage: but the disguise he wore, when I first saw him, joined to the prison's gloom, led me to mistake his figure and appearance—made me expose my falsehood, my infamy, and treat his honour'd person with abuse.

Aure. Yes, let his virtues make you thus repent: but let them also make you hope for pardon.

Elvir. Nay, he is just as well as compassionate; and for detected falsehood——

Aure. You make me tremble.

Elvir. Yet he shall hear my story—I'll follow him, and obtain his pity, if not his forgiveness.

Aure. And do not feel yourself degraded, to plead for that, too—He has no pride to triumph over the humble. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Garden.

Enter SIR LUKE, TWINEALL, *and* LADY TREMOR.

Twi. Why, really, Sir Luke, as my lord has given you charge to sound my principles, I must own they are just such as I delivered them to him.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, I only wish you to be a little more circumstantial—we will suppose the present Sultan no impostor—yet what pretensions do you think the other family possessed?

Twi. That I'll make clear to you at once—or if my reasons are not very clear, they are at least very positive, and that you know is the same thing:—This family—no—that family—the family that reigned before this—this came after that—that came before this. Now every one agrees that this family was always—so and so—[*Whispering.*]—and that the other was always—so and so—[*Whispering.*]—in short, every body knows that one of them had always a very suspicious—you know what.

Sir Luke. No, I don't.

Twi. Pshaw—pshaw—every body conjectures what—and though it was never said in so many words, yet it was always supposed—and though there never has been any proof, yet there have been things much more strong than proof—and for that very reason, Sir William— Sir Luke, I mean—I beg your pardon) for that very reason—I can't think what made me call you Sir William—for that very reason—(O, I was thinking of Sir William Tiffany)—for that very reason, let people say what they will—that, that must be their opinion.—But then where is the man who will speak his thoughts freely, as I have done?

Enter GUARDS, *who had been listening at a Distance, during this Speech.*

Sir Luke. [*Starting.*] Bless my soul, gentlemen, you make my heart leap to my very lips.

Guards. [*To* TWINEALL.] Sir, you are our prisoner, and must go with us.

Twi. Gentlemen, you are mistaken—I had all my clothes made in England, and 'tis impossible the bill can have followed me already.

Guard. You are charged with treason against the state.

Twi. Treason against the state?—You are mistaken: it cannot be me.

Guard. No—there is no mistake. [*Pulling out a Paper.*] You are here called, Henry Twineall.

Twi. But if they have left out *honourable*, it can't be me——I am the Honourable Henry Twineall.

Sir Luke. That you are to prove before your judges.

Guard. Yes, sir; and we are witnesses of the long speech you have just now been making.

Twi. And pray, gentlemen, did you know what I meant by it?

Guard. Certainly.

Twi. Why, then, upon my honour, it is more than I did—I wish I may be sacrificed——

Sir Luke. Well, well, you are going to be sacrificed—Don't be impatient.

Twi. But, gentlemen—Sir Luke!

[*The* GUARDS *seize him.*

Lady. Dear Mr. Twineall, I am afraid you will have occasion for the dignity of all my ancestors to support you under this trial.

Sir Luke. And have occasion for all my courage too.

Twi. But, Sir—but, gentlemen——

Sir Luke. Oh, I wou'd not be in your coat, fashionable as it is, for all the Sultan's dominions.

[*Exeunt* SIR LUKE *and* LADY *on One Side*—TWISEALL *and* GUARDS *on the Other.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Prison.

HASWELL *and the* FEMALE PRISONER *discovered.*

Hasw. Rather remain in this loathsome prison!—refuse the blessing offered you!—the blessing which your pleased fancy formed so precious, that you durst not even trust its reality!

Pris. Whilst my pleased fancy only saw the prospect, I own it was delightful: but now reason beholds it, the view is changed; and what, in the gay dream of fond delirium, seemed as a joyful event, in my waking hours of sad reflexion, would prove the most severe of punishments.

Hasw. Explain—what is the cause that makes you think thus?

Pris. A cause, that has alone for fourteen years made me resigned to a fate like this.—When you first mentioned my release from this dark dreary place, my wild ideas included, with the light, all that had ever made the light a blessing.—'Twas not the sun I saw in

my mad transport, but a lost husband filled my imagination—'twas the idea of him, that gave the colours of the world their beauty, and made me fondly hope to be cheered by their brightness.

Hasw. A husband!

Pris. But the world that I was wont to enjoy with him—to see again without him; every well-known object would wound my mind with dear delights for ever lost, and make my freedom torture.

Hasw. But yet——

Pris. Oh! on my knees a thousand times I have thanked Heaven that he partook not of this dire abode—that he shared not with me my hard bondage: a greater blessing I possess'd from that reflection, than all his loved society cou'd have given.—But in a happy world, where smiling nature pours her boundless gifts! oh! there his loss would be insupportable.

Hasw. Do you lament him dead?

Pris. Yes—or, like me, a prisoner—else he wou'd have sought me out—have sought his Arabella!—[HASWELL *Starts.*] Why do you start?

Hasw. Are you a Christian? an European?

Arabella. I am.

Has. The name made me suppose it.—I am shocked that—the Christian's sufferings—[*Trying to conceal his Surprise.*] But were you made a prisoner in the present Sultan's reign?

Arab. I was—or I had been set free on his ascent to the throne; for he of course gave pardon to all the enemies of the slain monarch, among whom I and my husband were reckoned; but I was taken in a vessel, where I was hurried in the heat of battle with a party of the late emperor's friends; and all these prisoners were, by the officers of the present Sultan, sent to slavery, or confined, as I have been, in hopes of ransom.

Hasw. And did never intelligence or inquiry reach you from your husband?

Arab. Never.

Hasw. Never?

Arab. I was once informed of a large reward offered for the discovery of a female Christian, and, with boundless hopes, I asked an interview with the messenger,—but found, on questioning him, *I* could not answer his description; as he secretly informed me, it was the Sultan who had caused the search, for one, whom *himself* had known, and dearly loved.

Hasw. Good Heaven! [*Aside.*] You then conclude your husband dead?

Arab. I do; or, like me, by some mischance, taken with the other party; and having no friend to plead his cause before the emperor whom he served——

Hasw. *I* will plead it, should I ever chance to find him: but, ere we can hope for other kindness, you must appear before the Sultan, to thank him for the favour which you now decline; and to tell the cause why you cannot accept it.

Arab. Alas! almost worn out with sorrow—an object of affliction as I am—in pity excuse me. Present my acknowledgements—my humble gratitude—but pardon my attendance.

Hasw. Nay, you must go—it is necessary. I will accompany you to his presence.—Retire a moment; but when I send, be ready.

Arab. I shall obey. [*She bows obediently, and exit.*

[*As* HASWELL *comes down,* ELVIRUS *places himself in his Path*—HASWELL *stops, looks at him with an austere Earnestness, which* ELVIRUS *observing, turns away his Face.*

Elvir. Nay, reproach me—I can bear your anger, but do not let me meet your eye.—Oh! it is more awful, now I know who you are, than if you had

kingdoms to dispense, or could deal instant death.—[HASWELL *looks on him with a manly Firmness, and then walks on,* ELVIRUS *following him.*]—I do not plead for my father now.—Since what has passed, I only ask forgiveness.

Hasw. Do you forgive yourself.

Elvir. I never will.

Enter KEEPER.

Keep. One of our prisoners, who, in his cell, makes the most piteous moans, has sent to entreat that Mr. Haswell will not leave this place till he has heard his complaints and supplications.

Hasw. Bring me to him. [*Going.*

Elvir. Nay, leave me not thus—perhaps never to see you more!

Hasw. You shall see me again: in the mean time, reflect on what you merit. [*Exit with* KEEPER.

Elvir. And what is that?—Confusion!—and yet, he says, I am to see him again—speak with him, perhaps.—Oh! there's a blessing the most abandoned feel, a divine propensity, they know not why, to commune with the virtuous. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The First Prison Scene.

Enter SECOND KEEPER, HASWELL *following.*

Hasw. Where is the poor unfortunate?

Second Keep. Here, sir.

Hasw. Am I to behold greater misery still?—a still greater object of compassion?

[SECOND KEEPER *opens a Door, and*

TWINEALL *enters as a Prisoner, in one of the Prison Dresses.*

Hasw. What have we here?

Twi. Don't you know me, Mr. Haswell?

Husw. I beg your pardon—I beg your pardon—but is it—is it——

Twi. Why, Mr. Haswell, if you don't know me, or won't know me, I shall certainly lose my senses.

Hasw. O, I know you—know you very well.

Twi. What, notwithstanding the alteration in my dress?—there was a cruel plunder!

Hasw. O, I'll procure you that again; and, for all things else, I'm sure you will have patience.

Twi. O, no, I can't—upon my honour, I can't.—I want a little lavender water—My hair is in such a trim too!—no powder—no brushes——

Hasw. I will provide you with them all.

Twi. But who will you provide to look at me, when I am dress'd?

Hasw. I'll bring all your acquaintance.

Twi. I had rather you wou'd take me to see them.

Hasw. Pardon me.

Twi. Dear Mr. Haswell!—Dear sir!—Dear friend!—What shall I call you?—Only say what title you like best, and I'll call you by it directly.—I always did love to please every body; and I am sure at this time, I am more in need of a friend, than ever I was in my life.

Hasw. What has brought you here?

Twi. Trying to get a place.

Hasw. A place?

Twi. Yes; and you see I have got one—and a very bad place it is!—in short, sir, my crime is said to be an offence against the state; and they tell me, no man on earth but you, can get it remitted.

Hasw. Upon my word, the pardons I have obtained, are but for few persons, and those already promised.

Twi. O, I know I am no favourite of yours: you think me an impertinent, silly, troublesome fellow,—and that my conduct in life will be neither of use to my country, nor of benefit to society.

Hasw. I think, at least, such glaring imperfections as yours, will not be of such disadvantage to society, as those of a less faulty man. In beholding your conduct, thousands shall turn from the paths of folly to which fashion impels them: therefore, Mr. Twineall, if not pity for your failings, yet a concern for the good effect they may have upon the world (should you be admitted there again) will urge me to solicit your release.

Twi. Sir, you have such powers of oratory—such eloquence!—and I doubt not but that you are admired by the world equally for those brilliant——

Enter MESSENGER *to* HASWELL.

Mess. Sir, the Sultan is arrived in the council chamber, and has sent me—— [*Whispers.*

Hasw. I come.—Mr. Twineall, farewell for the present. [*Exit with* MESSENGER.

Twi. Now, what was that whisper about?—Oh, Heavens! perhaps my death in agitation!—I have brought myself into a fine situation!—done it by wheedling too!

Second Keep. Come, your business with Mr. Haswell being ended, return to your cell. [*Roughly.*

Twi. Certainly, sir—certainly!—O, yes!—How happy is this prison in having such a keeper as you!—so mild, so gentle—there is something about you—I said, and I thought the moment I had the happiness of meeting you here, Dear me! said I—what would one give for such a gentleman in England!—You

wou'd be of infinite service to some of our young bucks, sir.

Second Keep. Go to your cell—go to your cell. [*Roughly.*

Twi. This world wou'd be nothing without elegant manners, and elegant people in all stations of life.—

Enter MESSENGER, *who whispers* SECOND KEEPER.

Another whisper! [*Terrified.*

Second Keep. No; come this way.—The judges are now sitting in the hall, and you must come before them.

Twi. Before the judges, sir—O, dear sir!—what, in this deshabille?—in this coat?—Dear me!—but to be sure one must conform to customs—to the custom of the country where one resides. [*He goes to the Door, and then stops.*] I beg your pardon, sir—wou'd not you chuse to go first?

Second Keep. No.

Twi. O! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Council Chamber.

Enter SULTAN, HASWELL, *and* GUARDS.

Hasw. Sultan, I have gone beyond the limits of your bounty in my promises; and for one poor unhappy female, I have still to implore your clemency.

Sult. No—you named yourself the number to release, and it is fixed—I'll not increase it.

Hasw. A poor miserable female——

Sult. Am I less miserable than she is?—And who shall relieve me of my sorrows?

Hasw. Then let me tell you, Sultan, she is above

your power to oblige, or to punish.—Ten years. nay more, confinement in a drear cell, has been no greater punishment to her, than had she lived in a pleasant world deprived of the man she loved.

Sult. Ha!

Hasw. And freedom, which I offered, she rejects with scorn, because he is not included in the gift.

Sult. You talk of prodigies!— [*He makes a Sign for the* GUARDS *to retire, and they withdraw.*] and yet I once knew a heart equal to this description.

Hasw. Nay, will you see her, witness yourself the fact?

Sult. I will.—Why do I tremble?—My busy fancy presents an image——

Hasw. Yes, tremble! [*Threatening.*

Sult. Ha! have a care—what tortures are you preparing for me?—My mind shrinks at the thought.

Hasw. Your wife you will behold—whom you have kept in want, in wretchedness, in a damp dungeon, for these fourteen years, because you wou'd not listen to the voice of pity.——Dread her look—her frown—not on her own account alone, but for hundreds of her fellow sufferers: for while your selfish fancy was searching with wild anxiety for her *you* loved—unpitying you forgot—others might love like you.

Sult. O! do not bring me to a trial which I have not courage to support.

Hasw. She attends without.—I sent for her to thank you for the favour she declines.—Nay, be composed —, knows you not—cannot, thus disguised as the Sultan. [*Exit* HASWELL.

Sult. O, my Arabella! could I have thought that your approach wou'd ever impress my mind with horror!—or that, instead of flying to your arms with all the love I bear you, terror and shame shou'd fix me a statue of remorse.

Enter HASWELL, *leading* ARABELLA.

Hasw. Here kneel, and return your thanks.

Sult. My Arabella! worn with grief and anguish! [*Aside.*

Arab. [*Kneeling to the* SULTAN.] Sultan, the favour you wou'd bestow, I own and humbly thank you for.

Sult. Gracious Heaven! [*In much Agitation.*

Arab. But as I am now accustomed to confinement, and the fairest prospect which the world can give, cannot inspire a wish that warms my heart to the enjoyment—I supplicate permission to transfer the blessing you have offered me, to one of those who may have friends to welcome their return from bondage, and so make freedom precious.—I have none to rejoice at *my* release—none to lament my destiny while a prisoner.—And were I free in this vast world, forlorn and friendless, 'tis but a prison still.

Sult. What have I done?

Throwing himself on a Sofa, with the greatest Emotion.]

Hasw. Speak to him again: he repents of the severity with which he has caused his fellow creatures to be used. Tell him you forgive him.

Arab. [*Going to him.*] Believe me, emperor, I forgive all who have ever wronged me—all who have ever caused my sufferings.——Pardon *you*.—Alas! I have pardoned even those who tore me from my husband!—Oh, Sultan! all the tortures you have made me suffer, compared to such a pang as that was—did I say I had forgiven those enemies of my peace?—Oh! I am afraid—afraid I have not yet.

Sult. Forgive them now, then,—for he is restored. —[*Taking off his Turban.*]—Behold him in the Sultan, and once more seal my pardon.—[*She faints on* HASWELL.]—Nay, pronounce it quickly, or my remorse for what you have endured, will make my present tortures greater—than any my cruelties have inflicted.

Arab. [*Recovering.*] Is this the light you promised?

—[*To* HASWELL.]—Dear precious light!—Is this my freedom? to which I bind myself a slave for ever—[*Embracing the* SULTAN.]—Was I *your* captive?—Sweet captivity! more precious than an age of liberty!

Sult. Oh! my Arabella! through the amazing changes of my fate (which I will soon disclose), think not, but I have searched for *thee* with unceasing care: but the blessing to behold you once again was left for my kind monitor alone to bestow.——Oh, Haswell! had I, like you, made others' misery my concern, like you sought out the wretched, how many days of sorrow had I spared myself, as well as her I love!—for I long since had found my Arabella.

Arab. Oh, Heaven! that weighest our sufferings with our joys, and as our lives decline seest in the balance thy blessings far more ponderous than thy judgments—be witness, I complain no more of what I have endured, but find an ample recompense this moment.

Hasw. I told you, sir, how you might be happy.

Sult. ——Take your reward—(to a heart like yours, more valuable than treasure from my coffers) —this signet, with power to redress the wrongs of all my injured subjects.

Hasw. Valuable indeed!——

Arab. [*To* HASWELL.] Oh, virtuous man!—to reward thee are we made happy—to give thy pitying bosom the joy to see us so, Heaven has remitted its intended punishment of continual separation.

Sult. Come, my beloved wife! come to my palace: there, equally, my dearest happiness, as when the cottage gave its fewer joys!—And in him [*To* HASWELL. we not only find our present good but dwell securely on our future hopes—for here I vow, before he leaves our shores, I will adopt every measure he shall point out; and those acts of my life whereon he shall lay

his censure, these will I make the subject of repentance.

[*Exeunt* SULTAN *and* ARABELLA.—HASWELL *bows to Heaven in silent Thanks.*

Enter KEEPER.

Keep. An English prisoner, just now condemned to lose his head, one Henry Twineall, humbly begs permission to speak a few short sentences, his last dying words, to Mr. Haswell.

Hasw. Condemned to lose his head?—Lead me to him.

Keep. O, sir, you need not hurry yourself: for it is off by this time, I dare say.

Hasw. Off?

Keep. Yes, sir,: we don't stand long about such things in this country—I dare say it is off.

Hasw. [*Impatiently.*] Lead me to him instantly.

Keep. O! 'tis of consequence, is it, sir?—if that is the case— [*Exit* KEEPER *followed by* HASWELL.

SCENE IV.

An Archway at the Top of the Stage.

Enter, through the Archway, several GUARDS—TWINEALL *in the Middle, dressed for Execution, with a large Book in his Hand.*

Twi. One more stave, gentlemen, if you please.

Off. The time is expired.

Twi. One more, gentlemen, if you please.

Off. The time is expired.

Enter HASWELL.

Twi. Oh! my dear Mr. Haswell!

[*Bursting into Tears.*

Hasw. What, in tears at parting with me?—This is a compliment indeed!

Twi. I hope you take it as such—I am sure I mean it as such.—It kills me to leave *you*—it breaks my heart; and I once flattered myself such a charitable, good, feeling, humane man as you——

Hasw. Hold! Hold!—This, Mr. Twineall, is the vice which has driven you to the fatal precipice whereon you stand; and in death will you not relinquish it?

Twi. What vice, sir?

Hasw. Flattery!—a vice that renders you not only despicable, but odious.

Twi. But how has flattery been the cause?

Hasw. Your English friend, before he left the island, told me what information you had required from him; and that he had given you the direct reverse of every person's character, as a just punishment for your mean premeditation and base designs.

Twi. I never imagined that amiable friend had sense enough to impose upon any body!

Hasw. And, I presume, he could not imagine that fate wou'd carry the consequences of his imposition to a crisis like this.

Twi. Oh! cou'd fate be arrested in its course!

Hasw. You wou'd reform your conduct?

Twi. I wou'd—I wou'd never say another civil thing to any body—never—never again make myself agreeable.

Hasw. Release him—here is the Sultan's signet.

[*They release him.*

Twi. Oh! my dear Mr. Haswell! never was compassion!—never benevolence!—never such a heart as yours!

Hasw. Seize him—he has broken his contract already.

Twi. No, sir—No, sir—I protest you are an ill-

natured, surly, crabbed fellow. I always thought so, upon my word, whatever I may have said.

Hasw. And, I'll forgive *that* language sooner than the other—utter any thing but flattery.—Oh! never let the honest, plain, blunt, English name, become degraded by so mean a vice.

Lady. [*Without.*] Where is the poor creature?

Enter LADY TREMOR.

Lady. Oh! if his head be off, pray let me look at it.

Twi. No, madam, it is on—and I am very happy to tell you so.

Lady. Dear Heaven!—I expected to have seen it off!—but no matter. As it is on, I am come that it may be kept on; and have brought my Lord Flint, and Sir Luke, as witnesses.

Enter LORD FLINT, AURELIA, *and* SIR LUKE.

Hasw. And what have they to say?

Sir Luke. Who are we to tell our story to?—There does not seem to be any one sitting in judgment.

Hasw. Tell it to me, sir: I will report it.

Sir Luke. Why then, Mr. Haswell, as ghosts sometimes walk, and as one's conscience is sometimes troublesome, I think Mr. Twinecall has done nothing to merit death; and the charge which his lordship sent in against him we begin to think was too hastily made: but, if there was any false statement——

Lord. It was the fault of my not charging my memory.—Any error I have been guilty of must be laid to the fault of my total want of memory.

Hasw. And what do you hope from this confession?

Sir Luke. To have the prisoner's punishment of death remitted for some more favourable sentence.

Lord. Yes—for ten or twelve years imprisonment —or the gallies for fourteen years—or—

Sir Luke. Ay, ay, something in that mild way.

Hasw. For shame, for shame, gentlemen!—the extreme rigour you show in punishing a dissention from your opinion, or a satire upon your folly, proves, to conviction, what reward you had bestowed upon the *skilful* flatterer.

Twi. Gentlemen and ladies, pray why wou'd you wish me requited with such extreme severity, merely for my humble endeavours to make myself agreeable? —Lady Tremor, upon my honour, I was credibly informed your ancestors were Kings of Scotland.

Lady. Impossible!—you might as well say that you heard Sir Luke had distinguished himself at the battle of——

Twi. And, I *did* hear so.

Lady. And he *did* distinguish himself; for he was the only one who ran away.

Twi. Cou'd it happen?

Lady. Yes, sir, it did happen.

Sir Luke. And go you, Mr. Twineall, into a field of battle, and I think it is very likely to happen again.

Lord. If Mr. Haswell has obtained your pardon, sir, it is all very well: but let me advise you to conceal your sentiments on politics for the future, as you value your life.

Twi. I thank you, sir—I do value it.

Enter ELVIRUS.

Hasw. [*Going to him.*] Aurelia, in this letter to me, has explained your story with so much compassion, that, I must pity it too.—With freedom to your father and yourself, the Sultan restores his forfeited lands—and might I plead, Sir Luke, for your interest with Aurelia's friends, this young man's filial love shou'd be repaid by conjugal affection.

Sir Luke. As for that, Mr. Haswell, you have so

much interest at court, that your taking the young man under your protection is at once making his fortune; and as Aurelia was sent hither merely to get a husband, I don't see——

Aure. True, Sir Luke—and I am afraid my father and mother will begin to be uneasy that I have not procured one yet; and I shou'd be very sorry to give them concern.

Elvir. Rather say, sorry to make me wretched.

[*Taking her Hand.*

Enter ZEDAN.

Hasw. My Indian friend, have you received your freedom?

Zedan. Yes—and come to bid you farewell—which I wou'd never do, had I not a family in sorrow till my return—for you shou'd be my master, and I wou'd be your slave.

Hasw. I thank you—may you meet at home every comfort!

Zedan. May you—may you—what shall I say?—May you once in your life be a prisoner—then released—to feel such joy as I feel now!

Hasw. I thank you for a wish that tells me most emphatically, how much you think I have served you.

Twi. And, my dear lord, I sincerely wish you may once in your life have your head chopped off—just to know what I shou'd have felt in that situation.

Zedan. [*Pointing to* HASWELL.] Are all his countrymen as good as he?

Sir Luke. No-no-no-no—not all—but the worst of them are good enough to admire him.

Twi. Pray, Mr. Haswell, will you suffer all these encomiums?

Elvir. He *must* suffer them.—there are virtues

which praise cannot taint—such are Mr. Haswell's —for they are the offspring of a mind superior even to the love of fame. Neither can he, through envy, suffer by applause; for his character is too sacred to incite jealousy, and conciliates the respect, the love, and the admiration of all mankind.

THE END.

OPTEL
BOMBAY
AS ANCH
OPTEL



EVERY ONE HAS HIS FAULT;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

&
SILVA & SANDERSON LTD,
PRINTERS, LONDON W.

REMARKS.

There is at present an opinion prevailing, in regard to dramatic works, which, if just, is wholly contradictory to every proof of *cause and effect*, which has been applied to the rise and fall of other arts, and sciences.

It is said, that modern dramas are the worst that ever appeared on the English stage—yet it is well known, that the English theatres never flourished as they do at present.

When it is inquired, why painting, poetry, and sculpture, decline in England? "Want of encouragement," is the sure reply—but this reply cannot be given to the question, "Why dramatic literature fails?" for never was there such high remuneration conferred upon every person, and every work, belonging to the drama.

A new play, which, from a reputed wit of former times, would not, with success, bring him a hundred pounds, a manager will now purchase, from a reputed blockhead, at the price of near a thousand; and sustain all risk whether it be condemned or not.

Great must be the attraction of modern plays, to repay such speculation.

It follows, then, if the stage be really sunk so low as it is said to be, that patronage and reward have ruined, instead of having advanced, genius. Or, is it not more likely, that public favour has incited the envious to rail; or, at best, raised up minute inquirers into the excellence of that amusement, which charms a whole nation; and criticism sees faults, as fear sees ghosts—whenever they are looked for.

It is a consolation to the dramatist of the present age, that, while his plays are more attractive than ever those of former writers were, those authors had their cotemporary critics as well as he; though less acute and less severe, indeed, than the present race. As a testimony—they often had not satire sharp enough to avert that bitterest punishment to an ambitious author—neglect.

Of this play, "Every One has his Fault," nothing, in modesty, can be said, beyond mere matter of fact. It has been productive both to the manager and the writer, having, on its first appearance, run, in the theatrical term, near thirty nights; during which, some of the audience were heard to laugh, and some were seen to weep—it may likewise with truth be added, that, whatever critics may please to say against the production, they cannot think more humbly of its worth, than

THE AUTHOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lord Norland	*Mr. Farren.*
Sir Robert Ramble	*Mr. Lewis.*
Mr. Solus	*Mr. Quick.*
Mr. Harmony	*Mr. Munden.*
Mr. Placid	*Mr. Fawcett.*
Mr. Irwin	*Mr. Pope.*
Hammond	*Mr. Powell.*
Porter	*Mr. Thompson.*
Edward	*Miss Grist.*
Lady Eleanor Irwin	*Mrs. Pope.*
Mrs. Placid	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
Miss Spinster	*Mrs. Webb.*
Miss Woodburn	*Mrs. Esten.*

Servants, *&c.*

SCENE—London.

EVERY ONE HAS HIS FAULT.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. PLACID'S.

Enter MR. PLACID *and* MR. SOLUS.

Plac. You are to blame.

Sol. I say the same by you.

Plac. And yet your singularity pleases me; for you are the first elderly bachelor I ever knew, who did not hug himself in the reflection, that he was not in the trammels of wedlock.

Sol. No; I am only the first elderly bachelor who has truth and courage enough, to confess his dissatisfaction.

Plac. And you really wish you were married?

Sol. I do. I wish still more, that I had been married thirty years ago. Oh! I wish that a wife and half a score children would now start up around me, and bring along with them all that affection, which we should have had for each other by being earlier acquainted. But as it is, in my present state, there is not a person in the world I care a straw for;—and the

world is pretty even with me, for I don't believe there is a creature in it who cares a straw for me.

Plac. Pshaw! You have in your time been a man of gallantry; and, consequently, must have made many attachments.

Sol. Yes, such as men of gallantry usually make. I have been attached to women, who have purloined my fortune, and to men, who have partaken of the theft: I have been in as much fear of my mistress, as you are of your wife.

Plac. Is that possible?

Sol. Yes; and without having one of those tender, delicate, ties of a husband, an excuse for my apprehension.—I have maintained children——

Plac. Then why do you complain for the want of a family?

Sol. I did not say, I ever had any children; I said, I had maintained them; but I never believed they were mine; for I could have no dependence upon the principles of their mother—and never did I take one of those tender infants in my arms, that the forehead of my valet, the squint eye of my apothecary, or the double chin of my chaplain, did not stare me in the face, and damp all the fine feelings of the parent, which I had just called up.

Plac. But those are accidents, which may occur in the marriage state.

Sol. In that case, a man is pitied—in mine, he is only laughed at.

Plac. I wish to heaven I could exchange the pity which my friends bestow on me, for the merriment which your ill fate excites.

Sol. You want but courage to be envied.

Plac. Does any one doubt my courage?

Sol. No, if a prince were to offend you, you would challenge him——

Plac. But if my wife offend me, I am obliged to

make an apology.—Was not that her voice? I hope she has not overheard our conversation.

Sol. If she have, she'll be in an ill humour.

Plac. That she will be, whether she have heard it or not.

Sol. Well, good day. I don't like to be driven from my fixed plan of wedlock; and, therefore, I won't be a spectator of your mutual discontent.

[*Going.*

Plac. But before you go, Mr. Solus, permit me to remind you of a certain concern, that, I think, would afford you much more delight, than all you can, at this time of life, propose to yourself in marriage. Make happy, by your beneficence, a near relation, whom the truest affection has drawn into that state, but who is denied the blessing of competency, to make the state supportable.

Sol. You mean my nephew, Irwin? But do not you acknowledge he has a wife and children? Did not he marry the woman he loved, and has he not, at this moment, a large family, by whom he is beloved? And is he not, therefore, with all his poverty, much happier than I am? He has often told me, when I have reproached him with his indiscreet marriage, "that in his wife he possessed kingdoms!" Do you suppose I will give any part of my fortune to a man who enjoys such extensive domains? No:—let him preserve his territories, and I will keep my little estate for my own use. *Exit.*

Plac. John! John!

Enter SERVANT.

Has your mistress been inquiring for me?

John. Yes, sir;—My lady asked, just now, if I knew who was with you?

Plac. Did she seem angry?

John. No, sir;—pretty well.

Plac. You scoundrel, what do you mean by "pretty well?" [*In Anger.*

John. Much as usual, sir.

Plac. And do you call that "pretty well?" You scoundrel, I have a great mind——

Enter MRS. PLACID, *speaking very loud.*

Mrs. P. What is the matter, Mr. Placid? What is all this noise about? You know I hate a noise. What is the matter?

Plac. My dear, I was only finding fault with that blockhead.

Mrs. P. Pray, Mr. Placid, do not find fault with any body in this house. But I have something which I must take *you* very severely to task about, sir.

Plac. No, my dear, not just now, pray.

Mrs. P. Why not now?

Plac. [*Looking at his Watch.*] Because dinner will be ready in a very few minutes. I am very hungry, and it will be cruel of you to spoil my appetite. John, is the dinner on table?

Mrs. P. No, John, don't let it be served yet—Mr. Placid, you shall first hear what I have to say.

[*Sitting down.*—Exit SERVANT.

Plac. But then I know I shall not be able to eat a morsel.

Mrs. P. Sit down. [PLACID *sits.*] I believe, Mr. Placid, you are going to do a very silly thing. I am afraid you are going to lend some money?

Plac. Well, my dear, and suppose I am?

Mrs. P. Then, I don't approve of people lending their money.

Plac. But, my dear, I have known you approve of borrowing money: and, once in our lives, what should we have done, if every body had refused to lend.

Mrs. P. That is nothing to the purpose.—And, now, I desire you will hear what I say, without speaking a word yourself.

Plac. Well, my dear.

Mrs. P. Now, mind you don't speak, till I have done.—Our old acquaintance, Captain Irwin, and Lady Eleanor, his wife (with whom we lived upon very intimate terms, to be sure, while we were in America), are returned to London; and, I find, you have visited them very frequently.

Plac. Not above two or three times, upon my word; for it hurts me to see them in distress, and I forbear to go.

Mrs. P. There! you own they are in distress; I expected as much. Now, own to me that they have asked you to lend them money.

Plac. I do own it—I do own it. Now, are you satisfied?

Mrs. P. No: for I have no doubt but you have promised they shall have it.

Plac. No, upon my word I have not promised.

Mrs. P. Then promise me they shall not.

Plac. Nay, my dear, you have no idea of their unhappy situation.

Mrs. P. Yes, I have; and 'tis that which makes me suspicious.

Plac. His regiment is now broken; all her jewels, and little baubles, are disposed of; and he is in such dread of his old creditors, that, in the lodging they have taken, he passes by the name of Middleton—They have three more children, my dear, than when we left them in New York; and they have, in vain, sent repeated supplications, both to his uncle, and her father, for the smallest bounty.

Mrs. P. And is not her father, my Lord Norland, a remarkably wise man, and a good man? and ought you to do for them, what he has refused?

Plac. They have offended him, but they have never offended me.

Mrs. P. I think, 'tis an offence, to ask a friend for money, when there is no certainty of returning it.

Plac. By no means: for, if there were a certainty, even an enemy might lend.

Mrs. P. But I insist, Mr. Placid, that they shall not find a friend in you upon this occasion.—What do you say, sir?

Plac. [*After a Struggle.*] No, my dear, they shall not.

Mrs. P. Positively shall not?

Plac. Positively shall not—since they have found an enemy in you.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Dinner is on table.

Plac. Ah! I am not hungry now.

Mrs. P. What do you mean by that, Mr. Placid? I insist on your being hungry.

Plac. Oh, yes! I have a very excellent appetite. I shall eat prodigiously.

Mrs. P. You had better. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at MR. HARMONY'S.

Enter MR. HARMONY, *followed by* MISS SPINSTER.

Miss S. Cousin, cousin Harmony, I will not forgive you, for thus continually speaking on the behalf of every servant whom you find me offended with. Your philanthropy becomes insupportable; and, instead of being a virtue, degenerates into a vice.

Har. Dear madam, do not upbraid me for a constitutional fault.

Miss S. Very true; you had it from your infancy. I have heard your mother say, you were always foolishly tender hearted, and never showed one of

those discriminating passions of envy, hatred, or revenge, to which all her other children were liable.

Har. No: since I can remember, I have felt the most unbounded affection for all my fellow creatures. I even protest to you, dear madam, that, as I walk along the streets of this large metropolis, so warm is my heart towards every person who passes me, that I long to say, "How do you do?" and, "I am glad to see you," to them all. Some men, I should like even to stop, and shake hands with;—and some women, I should like even to stop, and kiss.

Miss S. How can you be so ridiculous!

Har. Nay, 'tis truth: and I sincerely lament, that human beings should be such strangers to one another as we are! We live in the same street, without knowing one another's necessities; and oftentimes meet and part from each other at church, at coffee-houses, playhouses, and all public places,—without ever speaking a single word, or nodding "Good b'ye!" though 'tis a hundred chances to ten we never see one another again.

Miss S. Let me tell you, Harriet, all that pretended philanthropy renders you ridiculous. There is not a fraud, a theft, or hardly any vice committed, that you do not take the criminal's part, shake your head, and cry, "Provisions are so scarce!" And no longer ago than last Lord Mayor's Day, when you were told that Mr. Alderman Ravenous was ill with an indigestion, you endeavoured to soften the matter, by exclaiming, "Provisions are so scarce!"—But, above all, I condemn that false humanity, which induces you to say many things in conversation, which deserve to stigmatize you with the character of deceit.

Har. This is a weakness, I confess. But though my honour sometimes reproaches me with it, my conscience never does: for it is by this very failing that I have frequently made the bitterest

enemies friends—Just by saying a few harmless sentences, which, though a species of falsehood and deceit, yet, being soothing and acceptable to the person offended, I have immediately inspired him with lenity and forgiveness; and then, by only repeating the selfsame sentences to his opponent, I have known hearts cold and closed to each other, warmed and expanded as every human creature's ought to be.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Solus. [*Exit*

Miss S. I cannot think, Mr. Harmony keep company with that old bachelor; h of all others on earth, I dislike; and so I to quit the room, though I have a thou more to say. [*I*

Enter SOLUS.

Har. Mr. Solus, how do you do?

Sol. I am very lonely at home; will and dine with me?

Har. Now you are here, you had better stay with me: we have no company; only my cousin Miss Spinster and myself.

Sol. No, I must go home: do come to my house.

Har. Nay, pray stay: what objection can you have?

Sol. Why, to tell you the truth, your relation Miss Spinster, is no great favourite of mine; like to dine with you, because I don't l pany.

Har. That is, to me, surprising!

Sol. Why, old bachelors and old agree: we are too much alike in our hab our own hearts so well, we are apt to di foible we would wish to forget, in the s played by the other. Miss Spinster is pec

and tiresome, and I am always in a fidget when I am in her company.

Har. How different are her sentiments of you! for one of her greatest joys is to be in your company. [SOLUS *starts and smiles.*] Poor woman! she has, to be sure, an uneven temper—

Sol. No, perhaps I am mistaken.

Har. But I will assure you, I never see her in half such good humour as when you are here: for I believe you are the greatest favourite she has.

Sol. I am very much obliged to her, and I certainly am mistaken about her temper—Some people, if they look ever so cross, are goodnatured in the main; and I dare say she is so. Besides, she never has had a husband to sooth and soften her disposition; and there should be some allowance made for that.

Har. Will you dine with us?

Sol. I don't care if I do. Yes, I think I will. I must however step home first:—but I'll be back in a quarter of an hour.—My compliments to Miss Spinster, if you should see her before I return. [*Exit.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. My lady begs to know, sir, if you have invited Mr. Solus to dine? because if you have, she shall go out. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter Miss SPINSTER.

Har. Yes, madam, I could not help inviting him; for, poor man, his own house is in such a state for want of proper management, he cannot give a comfortable dinner himself.

Miss S. And so he must spoil the comfort of mine.

Har. Poor man! poor man! after all the praises he has been lavishing upon you!

Miss S. What praises?

Har. I won't tell you: for you won't believe them.

Miss S. Yes, I shall.—Oh no—now I recollect, this is some of your invention.

Har. Nay, I told him it was *his* invention; for he declared you looked better last night, than any other lady at the Opera.

Miss S. Well, this sounds like truth:—and, depend upon it, though I never liked the manners of Mr. Solus much, yet—

Har. Nay, Solus has his faults.

Miss S. So we have all.

Har. And will you leave him and me to dine by ourselves?

Miss S. Oh no, I cannot be guilty of such ill manners, though I talked of it. Besides, poor Mr. Solus does not come so often, and it would be wrong not to show him all the civility we can. For my part, I have no dislike to the man; and, if taking a bit of dinner with us now and then can oblige either you or him, I should be to blame to make any objection. Come, let us go into the drawing-room to receive him.

Har. Ay! this is right: this is as it should be.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Room at the Lodgings of MR. IRWIN.

MR. IRWIN *and* LADY ELEANOR IRWIN *discovered.*

Lady E. My dear husband, my dear Irwin, I cannot bear to see you thus melancholy. Is this the joy of returning to our native country, after a nine years' banishment?

Irw. Yes: For I could bear my misfortunes, my wretched poverty, with patience, in a land where our sorrows were shared by those about us; but here, in London, where plenty and ease smile upon every face; where, by your birth you claim distinction, and I by services;—here to be in want,—to be obliged to take another name, through shame of our own,—to tremble at the voice of every stranger, for fear he should be a creditor,—to meet each old acquaintance with an averted eye, because we would not feel the pang of being shunned. To have no reward for all this, even in a comfortable home; but in this our habitation, to see our children looking up to me for that support I have not in my power to give—Can I,—can I love them and you, and not be miserable?

Lady E. Yet I am not so. And I am sure you will not doubt my love to you or them.

Irw. I met my uncle this morning, and was mean enough to repeat my request to him:—he burst into a fit of laughter, and told me my distresses were the result of my ambition, in marrying the daughter of a nobleman, who himself was too ambitious ever to pardon us.

Lady E. Tell me no more of what he said.

Irw. This was a day of trials;—I saw your father too.

Lady E. My father! Lord Norland! Oh Heavens!

Irw. He passed me in his carriage.

Lady E. I envy you the blessing of seeing him! For, oh!—Excuse my tears—he is my father still.—How did he look?

Irw. As well as he did at the time I used to watch him from his house, to steal to you.—But I am sorry to acquaint you, that, to guard himself against all returning love for you, he has, I am informed, adopted a

young lad, on whom he bestows every mark of that paternal affection, of which you lament the loss.

Lady E. May the young man deserve his tenderness better than I have done—May he never disobey him—May *he* be a comfort, and cherish his benefactor's declining years—And when his youthful passions teach him to love, may they not, like mine, teach him disobedience!

Enter a SERVANT, *with a Letter.*

What is that letter?

Serv. It comes from Mr. Placid, the servant, who brought it, said, and requires no answer. [*Exit.*

Irw. It's strange how I tremble at every letter I see, as if I dreaded the contents. How poverty has unmanned me! [*Aside.*] I must tell you, my dear, that finding myself left this morning without a guinea, I wrote to Mr. Placid, to borrow a small sum: This is his answer: [*Reading the Superscription.*] *To Mr. Middleton.*—That's right: he remembers the caution I gave him. I had forgot whether I had done so, for my memory is not so good as it was. I did not even now recollect this hand, though it is one I am so well acquainted with, and ought to give me joy rather than sorrow. [*Opens the Letter hastily, reads, and lets it drop.*] Now I have not a friend on earth.

Lady E. Yes, you have me. You forget me.

Irw. [*In a Transport of Grief.*] I would forget you—you—and all your children.

Lady E. I would not lose the remembrance of you or of them, for all my father's fortune.

Irw. What am I to do? I must leave you! I must go, I know not whither! I cannot stay to see you perish. [*Takes his Hat, and is going.*

Lady E. [*Holding him.*] Where would you go? 'tis evening—'tis dark—Whither would you go at this time?

Irw. [*Distractedly.*] I must consider what's to be done—and in this room my thoughts seem too confined to reflect.

Lady E. And are London streets calculated for reflection?

Irw. No; for action. To hurry the faint thought to resolution.

Lady E. You are not well—Your health has been lately impaired.—Your temper has undergone a change too;—I tremble lest any accident—

Irw. What accident? [*Wildly.*

Lady E. I know your provocations from an ungrateful world: But despise it: as that despises you.

Irw. But for your sake, I could.

Lady E. Then witness, Heaven, I am happy!—Though bred in all the delicacy, the luxury of wealth and splendour; yet I have never murmured at the change of fortune, while that change has made me wife to you, and mother of your children.

Irw. We will be happy—if possible. But give me this evening to consider what plan to fix upon.—There is no time to lose: we are without friends—without money,—without credit.—Farewell for an hour.—I will see Mr. Placid, if I can; and though he have not the money to lend, he may perhaps, give me some advice.

Lady E. Suppose I call on her?—Women are sometimes more considerate than men, and—

Irw. Do you for the best, and so will I.—Heavens bless you! [*Exeunt separately.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Coffee or Club Room at a Tavern.

Enter SIR ROBERT RAMBLE—MR. SOLUS *and* MR PLACID *at the opposite Side.*

Sol. Sir Robert Ramble, how do you do?

Sir R. My dear Mr. Solus, I am glad to see you. I have been dining by myself, and now come into this public room, to meet with some good company.

Sol. Ay, Sir Robert, you are now reduced to the same necessity which I frequently am: frequently am obliged to dine at taverns and coffee-houses, for want of company at home.

Sir R. I protest I am never happier than in a house like this, where a man may meet his friend without the inconvenience of form, either as a host or a visitor.

Sol. Sir Robert, give me leave to introduce to you Mr. Placid, he has been many years abroad; but I believe he now means to remain in his own country for the rest of his life. This, Mr. Placid, is Sir Robert Ramble.

Sir R. [*To* MR. PLACID.] Sir, I shall be happy in your acquaintance, and I assure you, if you will

do me the honour to meet me now and then at this house, you will find every thing very pleasant. I verily believe that since I lost my wife, which is now about five months ago, I verily believe I have dined here three days out of the seven.

Plac. Have you lost your wife, sir? And so lately?

Sir R. [*With great Indifference.*] Yes, sir; about five months ago—Is it not, Mr. Solus? You keep account of such things better than I do.

Sol. Oh! ask me no questions about your wife, Sir Robert; if she had been mine, I would have had her to this moment.

Plac. What, wrested her from the gripe of death?

Sir R. No, sir; only from the gripe of the Scotch lawyers.

Sol. More shame for you. Shame to wish to be divorced from a virtuous wife.

Plac. Was that the case? Divorced from a virtuous wife! I never heard of such a circumstance before. Pray, Sir Robert [*Very anxiously.*] will you indulge me, by letting me know in what manner you were able to bring about so great an event?

Sir R. It may appear strange to you, sir; but my wife and I did not live happy together.

Plac. Not very strange, sir: I can conceive—I can conceive very well.

Sol. Yes, he can conceive that part to perfection.

Sir R. And so, I was determined on a divorce.

Plac. But then her character could not be unimpeached.

Sir R. Yes, it was, sir. You must know, we were married in Scotland, and by the laws there, a wife can divorce her husband for breach of fidelity; and so, though my wife's character was unimpeached, mine was not—and she divorced me.

Plac. Is this the law in Scotland?

Sol. It is. Blessed, blessed, country! that will bind young people together before the years of discretion, and, as soon as they have discretion to repent, will unbind them again!

Plac. I wish I had been married in Scotland.

Sol. But, Sir Robert, with all this boasting, you must own that your divorce has greatly diminished your fortune.

Sir R. [*Taking* SOLUS *aside.*] Mr. Solus, you have frequently hinted at my fortune being impaired; but I do not approve of such notions being received abroad.

Sol. I beg your pardon: but every body knows that you have played very deep lately, and have been a great loser: and every body knows——

Sir R. No, sir, every body does not know it, for I contradict the report wherever I go. A man of fashion does not like to be reckoned poor, no more than he likes to be reckoned unhappy. We none of us endeavour to be happy, sir, but merely to be thought so; and for my part, I had rather be in a state of misery, and envied for my supposed happiness, than in a state of happiness, and pitied for my supposed misery.

Sol. But, consider, these misfortunes, which I have just hinted at, are not of any serious nature, only such as a few years economy——

Sir R. But, were my wife and her guardian to become acquainted with these little misfortunes, they would triumph in my embarrassments.

Sol. Lady Ramble triumph! [*They join* MR. PLACID.] She, who was so firmly attached to you, that I believe nothing but a compliance with your repeated request to be separated, caused her to take the step she did.

Sir R. Yes, I believe she did it to oblige me, and I am very much obliged to her.

Sol. As good a woman, Mr. Placid——

Sir R. Very good—but very ugly.

Sol. She is beautiful.

Sir R. [*To* SOLUS.] I tell you, sir, she is hideous. And then she was grown so insufferably peevish.

Sol. I never saw her out of temper.

Sir R. Mr. Solus, it is very uncivil of you to praise her before my face. Lady Ramble, at the time I parted with her, had every possible fault both of mind and person, and so I made love to other women in her presence; told her bluntly, that I was tired of her; that I was very sorry to make her uneasy, but that I could not love her any longer.—And was not that frank and open?

Sol. Oh that I had but such a wife as she was!

Sir R. I must own I loved her myself when she was young.

Sol. Do you call her old?

Sir R. In years I am certainly older than she, but the difference of sex makes her a great deal older than I am. For instance, Mr. Solus, you have often lamented not being married in your youth; but if you had, what would you have now done with an old wife, a woman of your own age?

Sol. Loved and cherished her.

Sir R. What, in spite of her loss of beauty?

Sol. When she had lost her beauty, most likely I should have lost my eyesight, and have been blind to the wane of her charms.

Plac. [*Anxiously.*] But, Sir Robert, you were explaining to me—Mr. Solus, give me leave to speak to Sir Robert—I feel myself particularly interested on this subject.—And, sir, you were explaining to me——

Sir R. Very true: Where did I leave off? Oh! at my ill usage of my Lady Ramble. Yes, I did use her very ill, and yet she loved me. Many a time, when she has said to me,—"Sir Robert, I detest your principles, your manners, and even your person,"—often at that very instant, I have seen a little sparkle of a wish, peep out of the corner of one eye, that has called out

to me, "Oh! Sir Robert, how I long to make it up with you!"

Sol. [*To* MR. PLACID.] Do not you wish that your wife had such a little sparkle at the corner of one of her eyes?

Sir R. [*To* MR. PLACID.] Sir, do you wish to be divorced?

Plac. I have no such prospect. Mrs. Placid is faithful, and I was married in England.

Sir R. But if you have an unconquerable desire to part, a separate maintenance will answer nearly the same end—for if your lady and you will only lay down the plan of separation, and agree—

Plac. But, unfortunately, we never do agree!

Sir R. Then speak of parting, as a thing you dread worse than death; and make it your daily prayer to her, that she will never think of going from you—She will determine upon it directly.

Plac. I thank you; I am very much obliged to you; I thank you a thousand times.

Sir R. Yes, I have studied the art of teasing a wife; and there is nothing vexes her so much as laughing at her. Can you laugh, Mr. Placid?

Plac. I don't know whether I can; I have not laughed since I married.—But I thank you, sir, for your instructions—I sincerely thank you.

Sol. And now, Sir Robert, you have had the good-nature to teach this gentleman how to get rid of his wife, will you have the kindness to teach me how to procure one?

Enter MR. IRWIN.

Sir R. Hah! sure I know that gentleman's face!

Sol. My nephew! Let me escape his solicitations. [*Aside.*]—Here, waiter! [*Exit.*

Plac. Irwin! [*Starting.*] Having sent him a denial,

I am ashamed to see him. [*Aside.*] Here, Mr. Solus!—— [*Exit, following* MR. SOLUS.

Irw. [*Aside.*] More cool faces! My necessitous visage clears even a club-room.

Sir R. My dear Captain Irwin, is it you? Yes, 'faith it is—After a nine years' absence, I most sincerely rejoice to see you.

Irw. Sir Robert, you shake hands with a cordiality I have not experienced these many days, and I thank you.

Sir R. But what's the matter? You seem to droop—Where have you left your usual spirits? has absence from your country changed your manners?

Irw. No, sir; but I find some of my countrymen changed. I fancy them less warm, less friendly, than they were; and it is that which, perhaps, has this effect upon me.

Sir R. Am I changed?

Irw. You appear an exception.

Sir R. And I assure you, that instead of being more gloomy, I am even more gay than I was seven years ago; for then, I was upon the point of matrimony—but now, I am just relieved from its cares.

Irw. I have heard so. But I hope you have not taken so great an aversion to the marriage state as never to marry again?

Sir R. Perhaps not: But then it must be to some rich heiress.

Irw. You are right to pay respect to fortune. Money is a necessary article in the marriage contract.

Sir R. As to that—that would be no great object at present. No, thank Heaven, my estates are pretty large; I have no children; I have a rich uncle, excellent health, admirable spirits;—and thus happy, it would be very strange if I did not meet my old friends with those smiles which never for a moment quit my countenance.

Irw. In the dispensation of the gifts of Providence, how few are blest like you! [*Sighing.*

Sir R. And I assure you, my dear Mr. Irwin, it gives me the most serious reflections, and the most sincere concern, that the bulk of mankind are not.

Irw. I thank you, sir, most heartily: I thank you for mankind in general, and for myself in particular. For after this generous, unaffected declaration (with less scruple than I should to any one in the world) I will own to you—that I am at this very time in the utmost want of an act of friendship.

Sir R. [*Aside.*] And so am I—Now must I confess myself a poor man; or pass for an unfeeling one; and I will chuse the latter. [*Bowing with great Ceremony and Coldness.*] Any thing that I can command, is at your service.

Irw. [*Confounded, and hesitating.*] Why, then, Sir Robert—I am almost ashamed to say it—but circumstances have been rather unfavourable.—My wife's father [*Affecting to smile.*] is not reconciled to us yet—My regiment is broke—My uncle will not part with a farthing.—Lady Eleanor, my wife, [*Wipes his Eyes.*] has been supported as yet, with some little degree of tenderness, elegance; and—in short, I owe a small sum, which I am afraid of being troubled for; I want a trifle also for our immediate use, and if you would lend me a hundred pounds—though, upon my honour, I am not in a situation to fix the exact time when I can pay it—

Sir R. My dear sir, never trouble yourself about the time of paying it, because it happens not to be in my power to lend it you.

Irw. Not in your power?! I beg your pardon; but have not you this moment been saying, you are rich?

Sir R. And is it not very common to be rich without money? Are not half the town rich! And yet half the town has no money. I speak for this end of

the town, the west end. The Squares, for instance, part of Piccadilly, down St. James's Street, and so home by Pall Mall. We have all, estates, bonds, drafts, and notes of hand without number; but as for money, we have no such thing belonging to us.

Irw. I sincerely beg your pardon. And be assured, sir, nothing should have induced me to have taken the liberty I have done, but the misfortunes of my unhappy family, and having understood by your own words, that you were in affluence.

Sir R. I *am* in affluence, I am, I am; but not in so much, perhaps, as my hasty, inconsiderate account may have given you reason to believe. I forgot to mention several heavy incumbrances, which you will perceive are great drawbacks on my income.—As my wife sued for the divorce, I have her fortune to return; I have also two sisters to portion off—a circumstance I totally forgot. But, my good friend, though I am not in circumstances to do what you require, I will do something that shall be better. I'll wait upon your father-in-law, (Lord Norland) and entreat him to forgive his daughter: and I am sure he will if I ask him.

Irw. Impossible.

Sir R. And so it is, now I recollect: for he is the guardian of my late wife, and a request from me will be received worse than from any other person.—However, Mr. Irwin, depend upon it, that whenever I have an opportunity of serving you, I will. And whenever you shall do me the favour to call upon me, I shall be heartily glad to see you. If I am not at home, you can leave your card, which, you know, is all the same; and depend upon it, I shall be extremely glad to see you, or that, at any time. [*Exit.*

Irw. Is this my native country? Is this the hospitable land which we describe to strangers? No—We are savages to each other; nay, worse—The savage makes his fellow-savage welcome; divides with him

his homely fare; gives him the best apartment his hut affords, and tries to hush those griefs that are confided to his bosom—While in this civilized city, among my own countrymen, even among my brother officers in the army, and many of my nearest relations, so very civilized they are, I could not take the liberty to enter under one roof, without a ceremonious invitation,—and that they will not give me. I may leave my card at their door, but as for me, or any one of mine, they would not give us a dinner; unless, indeed, it was in such a style, that we might behold with admiration their grandeur, and return still more depressed to our own poverty.—Can I bear this treatment longer? No, not even for you, my Eleanor. And this [*Takes out a Pistol.*] shall now be the only friend to whom I will apply—And yet I want the courage to be a villain.

Enter MR. HARMONY, *speaking as he enters.*—IRWIN *conceals the Pistol instantly.*

Har. Let me see half a dozen newspapers—every paper of the day.

Enter WAITER.

Wait. That is about three dozen, sir.

Har. Get a couple of porters, and bring them all.

[*He sits down; they bring him Papers, and he reads*—IRWIN *starts, sits down, leans his Head on one of the Tables, and shows various Signs of Uneasiness; then comes forward.*

Irw. Am I a man, a soldier?—And a coward? Yes, I run away, I turn my back on life—I forsake the post, which my commander, Providence, has allotted me, and fly before a banditti of rude misfortunes. Rally me love, connubial and parental love, rally me back to the charge! No, those very affections sound the retreat.

[*Sits down with the same Emotions of Distraction as before.*

Har. That gentleman does not seem happy. I wish I had an opportunity of speaking to him. [*Aside.*

Irw. [*Coming forward, and speaking again.*] But Oh, my wife! what will be your sufferings, when I am brought home to your wretched abode!—And by my own hand!

Har. I am afraid, sir, I engross all the news here. [*Holding up the Papers.*

Irw. [*Still apart.*] Poor soul, how her heart will be torn!

Har. [*After looking stedfastly on him.*] Captain Irwin, till this moment I had not the pleasure of recollecting you!—It is Mr. Irwin, is it not?

Irw. [*His Mind deranged by his Misfortunes.*] Yes, sir: but what have you to say to him, more than to a stranger?

Har. Nothing more, sir, than to apologize to you, for having addressed you just now in so familiar a manner, before I knew who you were; and to assure you, that although I have no other knowledge of you than from report, and having been once, I believe, in your company at this very house, before you left England; yet, any services of mine, as far as my abilities can reach, you may freely command.

Irw. Pray, sir, do you live at the west end of the town?

Har. I do.

Irw. Then, sir, your services can be of no use to me.

Har. Here is the place where I live, here is my card. [*Gives it to him.*

Irw. And here is mine. And now I presume we have exchanged every act of friendship, which the strict forms of etiquette, in this town, will admit of.

Har. By no means, sir. I assure you my professions never go beyond my intentions; and if there is anything that I can serve you in——

Irw. Have you no sisters to portion off? no lady's

fortune to return? Or, perhaps, you will speak to my wife's father, and entreat him to forgive his child.

Har. On that subject, you may command me; for I have the honour to be intimately acquainted with Lord Norland.

Irw. But is there no reason you may recollect, why you would be the most unfit person in the world to apply to him?

Har. None. I have been honoured with marks of his friendship for many years past: and I do not know any one who could, with less hazard of his resentment, venture to name his daughter to him.

Irw. Well, sir, if you should see him two or three days hence—when I am set out on a journey I am going—if you will then say a kind word to him for my wife and children, I'll thank you.

Har. I will go to him instantly. [*Going.*

Irw. No, do not see him yet; stay till I am gone. He will do nothing till I am gone.

Har. May I ask where you are going?

Irw. No very tedious journey; but it is a country, to those who go without a proper passport, always fatal.

Har. I'll see Lord Norland to-night: perhaps I may persuade him to prevent your journey. I'll see him to-night, or early in the morning, depend upon it.—I am a man of my word, sir, though I must own I do live at the west end of the town. [*Exit.*

Irw. 'Sdeath! am I become the ridicule of my fellow-creatures! or am I not in my senses?—I know this is London—this house a tavern—I know I have a wife—Oh! 'twere better to be mad than to remember her!—She has a father—he is rich and proud—that I will not forget. But I will pass his house, and send a malediction as I pass it. [*Furiously.*] No; breathe out my last sigh at his inhospitable door, and that sigh shall breathe—forgiveness. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Lodgings of MR. IRWIN.

Enter MRS. PLACID, *followed by* LADY ELEANOR IRWIN.

Lady E. I am ashamed of the trouble I have given you, Mrs. Placid. It had been sufficient to have sent me home in your carriage; to attend me yourself was ceremonious.

Mrs. P. My dear Lady Eleanor, I was resolved to come home with you, as soon as Mr. Placid desired I would not.

Lady E. Was that the cause of your politeness? I am sorry it should.

Mrs. P. Why sorry? It is not proper he should have his way in every thing.

Lady E. But I am afraid you seldom let him have it at all.

Mrs. P. Yes, I do.—But where, my dear, is Mr. Irwin?

Lady E. [*Weeping.*] I cannot hear the name of Mr. Irwin, without shedding tears: his health has so declined of late, and his spirits been so bad—sometimes I even fear for a failure in his mind.

[*Weeps again.*

Mrs. P. Is not he at home?

Lady E. I hope he is. [*Goes to the Side of the Scenes.*] Tell your master, Mrs. Placid is here.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. My master is not come in yet, madam.

Lady E. Not yet? I am very sorry for it;—very sorry indeed.

Mrs. P. Bless me, my dear, don't look thus pale. Come, sit down, and I'll stay with you till he returns.

[*Sits down herself.*

Lady E. My dear, you forget, that Mr. Placid is in the carriage at the door all this time.

Mrs. P. No, I don't.—Come, let us sit and have half an hour's conversation.

Lady E. Nay, I insist upon your going to him, or desiring him to walk in.

Mrs. P. Now I think of it, they may as well drive him home, and come back for me.

Enter MR. PLACID.

Why, surely, Mr. Placid, you were very impatient! —I think you might have waited a few minutes longer.

Plac. I would have waited, my dear, but the evening is so damp.

Lady E. Ah! 'tis this evening—that makes me alarmed for Mr. Irwin.

Plac. Lady Eleanor, you are one of the most tender, anxious, and affectionate wives, I ever knew.

Mrs. P. There! Now he wishes he was your husband—he admires the conduct of every wife but his own, and envies every married man of his acquaintance. But it is very ungenerous in you.

Plac. So it is, my dear, and not at all consistent with the law of equity; for I am sure, there is not one of my acquaintance who envies me.

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid, your behaviour throughout this whole day, has been so totally different from what it ever was before, that I am half resolved to live no longer with you.

Plac. [*Aside.*] It will do—It will do.

Lady E. Oh, my dear friends, do not talk of part-

ing:—how can you, while every blessing smiles on your union? Even I, who have reason to regret mine, yet, while that load of grief, a separation from Mr. Irwin, is but averted, I will think every other affliction supportable. [*A loud Rapping at the Door.*] That is he!

Mrs. P. Why, you seem in raptures at his return.

Lady E. I know no greater rapture.

Enter IRWIN, *pale, trembling, and disordered.*

My dear, you are not well, I see.

Irw. [*Aside to her in Anger.*] Why do you speak of it?

Plac. How do you do, Irwin?

Irw. I am glad to see you. [*Bows.*

Mrs. P. But I am sorry to see you look so ill.

Irw. I have only been taking a glass too much.

[LADY ELEANOR *weeps.*

Plac. Pshaw! Don't I know you never drink.

Irw. You are mistaken—I do, when my wife is not by. I am afraid of her.

Plac. Impossible.

Irw. What! to be afraid of one's wife?

Plac. No, I think that very possible.

Mrs. P. But it does not look well when it is so; it makes a man appear contemptible, and a woman a termagant. Come, Mr. Placid, I cannot stay another moment. Good night. Heaven bless you! [*To* LADY ELEANOR.] —Good night, my dear Mr. Irwin;—and now, pray take my advice, and keep up your spirits.

Irw. I will, madam.— [*Shaking Hands with* PLACID.] And do you keep up your spirits. [*Exeunt* MR. *and* MRS. PLACID.—IRWIN *shuts the Door with Care after them, and looks round the Room, as if he feared to be seen or overheard.*] I am glad they are gone.—I spoke unkindly to you just now, did I not? My temper is altered lately; and yet I love you.

Lady E. I never doubted it, nor ever will.

Irw. If you did, you would wrong me; for there is no danger I would not risk for your sake: there is not an infamy I would not be branded with, to make you happy, nor a punishment I would not undergo, with joy, for your welfare.—But there's a bar to this; we are unfortunately so entwined together, so linked, so rivetted, so cruelly, painfully fettered, to each other, you could not be happy unless I shared the selfsame happiness with you.—But you will learn better—now you are in London, and amongst fashionable wives; you must learn better.

[*Walks about, and smiles, with a ghastly Countenance.*

Lady E. Do not talk, do not look thus wildly—Indeed, indeed, you make me very uneasy.

Irw. What! uneasy when I come to bring you comfort; and such comfort as you have not experienced for many a day? [*He pulls out a Pocketbook.*] Here is a friend in our necessity,—a friend, that brings a thousand friends; plenty and—no, not always—peace.

[*He takes several Papers from the Book, and puts them into her Hands—She looks at them, then screams.*

Lady E. Ah! 'tis money! [*Trembling.*] These are bank notes!

Irw. Hush! for Heaven's sake, hush! We shall be discovered. [*Trembling, and in great Perturbation.*] What alarms you thus?

Lady E. What alarms you?

Irw. Do you say, I am frightened?

Lady E. A sight so new, has frightened me.

Irw. Nay, they are your own: by Heaven, they are! No one on earth has a better, or a fairer right to them than yourself. It was a laudable act, by which I obtained them.—The parent bird had forsook its young, and I but forced it back, to perform the rites of nature.

Lady E. You are insane, I fear. No, no, I do not fear—I hope you are.

[*A loud Rapping at the Street Door—He starts, takes the Notes from her, and puts them hastily into his Pocket.*

Irw. Go to the door yourself; and if 'tis any one who asks for me, say, I am not come home yet.

[*She goes out, then returns.*

Lady E. It is the person belonging to the house; no one to us.

Irw. My dear Eleanor, are you willing to quit London with me in about two hours time?

Lady E. Instantly.

Irw. Nay, not only London, but England.

Lady E. This world, if you desire it. To go in company with you, will make the journey pleasant; and all I loved on earth would still be with me.

Irw. You can, then, leave your father without regret, never, never, to see him more?

Lady E. Why should I think on him, who will not think on me? [*Weeps.*

Irw. But our children——

Lady E. We are not to leave them?

Irw. One of them we must: but do not let that give you uneasiness. You know he has never lived with us since his infancy, and cannot pine for the loss of parents, whom he has never known.

Lady E. But I have known him. He was my first; and, sometimes, I think, more closely wound around my heart, then all the rest. The grief I felt on being forced to leave him, when we went abroad, and te constant anxiety I have since experienced, lest he should not be kindly treated, have augmented, I think, my tenderness.

Irw. All my endeavours to-day, as well as every other day, have been in vain, to find into what part of the country his nurse has taken him.—Nay, be not

thus overcome with tears; we will (in spite of all my haste to begone) stay one more miserable day here, in hopes to procure intelligence, so as to take him with us; and then—smile with contempt on all we leave behind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Library at LORD NORLAND'S.

Enter LORD NORLAND, *followed by* MR. HARMONY.

Lord N. [*In Anger.*] I tell you, Mr. Harmony, that if an indifferent person, one on whom I had never bestowed a favour in my life, were to offend me, it is in my nature never to forgive. Can I then forgive my own daughter, my only child, on whom I heaped continual marks of the most affectionate fondness? Shall she dare to offend me in the tenderest point, and you dare to suppose I will pardon her?

Har. Your child, consider.

Lord N. The weakest argument you can use. As my child, was she not most bound to obey me? As my child, ought she not to have sacrificed her own happiness to mine? Instead of which, mine has been

yielded up for a whim, a fancy, a fancy to marry a beggar; and, as such is her choice, let her beg with him.

Har. She does, by me;—pleads hard for your forgiveness.

Lord N. If I thought she dared to send a message to me, though dictated on her knees, she should find, that she had not yet felt the full force of my resentment.

Har. What could you do more?

Lord N. I have done nothing yet. At present, I have only abandoned her;—but I can persecute.

Har. I have no doubt of it: and, that I may not be the means of aggravating your displeasure, I assure you, that what I have now said has been entirely from myself, without any desire of hers; and, at the same time, I give you my promise, I will never presume to introduce the subject again.

Lord N. On this condition (but on no other) I forgive you now.

Har. And now, then, my lord, let us pass from those who have forfeited your love, to those who possess it.—I heard, sometime ago, but I never felt myself disposed to mention it to you, that you had adopted a young man as your son.

Lord N. A young man! Pshaw! No; a boy—a mere child, who fell in my way by accident.

Har. A chance child!—Ho! ho! I understand you.

Lord N. Do not jest with me, sir. Do I look——

Har. Yes, you look as if you would be ashamed to own it, if you had done.

Lord N. But this boy I am not ashamed of: he is a favourite—rather a favourite. I did not like him so well at first;—but custom,—and having a poor creature entirely at one's mercy, one begins to love it merely from the idea of—— What would be its fate if one did not?

Har. Is he an orphan, then?

Lord N. No.

Har. You have a friendship for his parents?

Lord N. I never saw the father: his mother I had a friendship for once. [*Sighing.*

Har. Ay, while the husband was away?

Lord N. I tell you, no. [*Violently.*]—But ask no more questions. Who his parents are, is a secret which neither he, nor any one (that is now living) knows, except myself; nor ever shall.

Har. Well, my lord, since 'tis your pleasure to consider him as your child, I sincerely wish you may experience more duty from him, than you have done from your daughter.

Lord N. Thank Heaven, his disposition is not in the least like hers—No: [*Very much impassioned.*] I have the joy to say, that never child was so unlike its mother.

Har. [*Starting.*] How! his mother!

Lord N. Confusion!—what have I said?—I am ashamed——

Har. No,—be proud.

Lord N. Of what?

Har. That you have a lawful heir to all your riches; proud, that you have a grandson.

Lord N. I would have concealed it from all the world; I wished it even unknown to myself.—And let me tell you, sir, (as not by my design, but through my inadvertency, you are become acquainted with this secret) that, if ever you breathe it to a single creature, the boy shall answer for it; for, were it known to be hers, though he were dearer to me than ever she was, I would turn him from my house, and cast him from my heart, as I have done her.

Har. I believe you;—and, in compassion to the child, give you my solemn promise, never to reveal who he is. I have heard that those unfortunate parents left an infant behind when they went abroad.

and that they now lament him as lost. Will you satisfy my curiosity, in what manner you sought and found him out?

Lord N. Do you suppose I searched for him? No;—he was forced upon me. A woman followed me, about eight years ago, in the fields adjoining to my country seat, with a half-starved boy in her hand, and asked my charity for my grandchild: the impression of the word made me turn round involuntarily; and, casting my eyes upon him, I was rejoiced not to find a feature of his mother's in all his face; and I began to feel something like pity for him. In short, he caught such fast hold by one of my fingers, that I asked him, carelessly, "if he would go home and live with me?" On which, he answered me so willingly, "Yes," I took him at his word.

Har. And did never your regard for him, plead in his mother's behalf?

Lord N. Never:—for, by Heaven, I would as soon forgive the robber, who met me last night at my own door, and, holding a pistol to my breast, took from me a sum to a considerable amount, as I would pardon her.

Har. Did such an accident happen to you?

Lord N. Have you not heard of it?

Har. No.

Lord N. It is amazing, we cannot put a stop to such depredations.

Har. Provisions are so scarce!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Miss Wooburn, my lord, if you are not engaged, will come and sit an hour with you.

Lord N. I have no company but such as she is perfectly acquainted with, and I shall be glad of her visit. [*Exit* SERVANT.

there is every reason to suppose——exm—exm—exm— [*Mutters.*

Lord. What, sir? what?

Twi. You ünderstand me.

Lord. No—explain.

Twi. Why, then, there is every reason to suppose—some people are not what they should be—pardon my suspicions, if they are wrong.

Lord. I *do* pardon your thoughts, with all my heart—but your words, young man, you must answer for. [*Aside.*]—Lady Tremor, good morning.

Twi. [*Aside.*] He is going to ruminate on my sentiments.

Lady. Shall we have your lordship's company in the evening? Mr. Haswell will be here; if your lordship has no objection?

Sir Luke. How do you know Mr. Haswell will be here?

Lord. Because he has just called, in his way to the palace, and said so: and he has been telling us some of the most interesting stories!

Sir Luke. Of his morning visits, I suppose—I heard Meanright say, he saw him very busy.

Lady. Sir Luke and I dine out, my lord; but we shall return early in the evening.

Lord. I will be here, without fail.—Sir Luke, a word with you, if you please—[*They come forward.*]—Mr. Twineall has taken some very improper liberties with the Sultan's name, and I must make him account for them.

Sir Luke. My lord, you are extremely welcome—[*Trembling.*]—to do whatever your lordship pleases with any one belonging to me, or to my house—but I hope your lordship will pay some regard to the master of it.

Lord. O! great regard to the master—and to the mistress also.—But for that gentleman——

Sir Luke. Do what your lordship pleases.

Lord. I will—and I will make him—

Sir Luke. If your lordship does not forget it.

Lord. I sha'n't forget it, Sir Luke—I have a very good memory when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord—I never did doubt it.

Lord. And I can be very severe, Sir Luke, when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord—I never did doubt it.

Lord. You may depend upon seeing me here in the evening; and then you shall find I have not threatened more than I mean to perform—Good morning.

Sir Luke. Good morning, my lord—I don't in the least doubt it. [*Exit* LORD FLINT.

Lady. [*Coming forward with* TWINEALL.] For Heaven's sake, Mr. Twineall, what has birth to do with——

Twi. It has to do with every thing,—even with beauty;—and I wish I may suffer death, if a woman, with all the personal and mental accomplishments of the finest creature in the world, wou'd, to me, be of the least value, if lowly born.

Sir Luke. I sincerely wish every man who visits here was of the same opinion.

Aure. For shame, Mr. Twineall! persons of mean birth ought not to be despised for what it was not in their power to prevent; and, if it is a misfortune, you should consider them only as objects of pity.

Twi. And so I do pity them—and so I do—most sincerely—Poor creatures!

[*Looking on* LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. Aye, now he has atoned most properly.

Lady. Mr. Twineall, let me tell you——

Sir Luke. My dear Lady Tremor—[*Taking her aside.*]—let him alone—let him go on—there is something preparing for him he little expects—so let the

Enter Miss Wooburn.

Lord N. I am sorry to see you thus; you have been weeping! Will you still lament your separation from a cruel husband, as if you had followed a kind one to the grave?

Miss W. By no means, my lord. Tears from our sex are not always the result of grief; they are frequently no more than little sympathetic tributes, which we pay to our fellow beings, while the mind and the heart are steeled against the weakness, which our eyes indicate.

Lord N. Can you say, your mind and heart are so steeled?

Miss W. I can: My mind is as firmly fixed against Sir Robert Ramble, as, at our first acquaintance, it was fixed upon him. And I solemnly protest——

Lord N. To a man of my age and observation, protestations are vain.—Give me a proof, that you have rooted him from your heart.

Miss W. Any proof you require, I will give you without a moment's hesitation.

Lord N. I take you at your word; and desire you to accept a gentleman, whom I shall recommend for your second husband. [Miss Wooburn starts.] You said, you would not hesitate a moment.

Miss W. I thought I should not;—but this is something so unexpected——

Lord N. You break your word, then; and still give cause for this ungrateful man to ridicule your fondness for him.

Miss W. No, I will put an end to that humiliation; and whoever the gentleman is whom you mean to propose—Yet, do not name him at present—but give me the satisfaction of keeping the promise I have made to you (at least for a little time) without exactly knowing how far it extends; for, in return I

have a promise to ask from you, before I acquaint you with the nature of your engagement.

Lord N. I give my promise. Now name your request.

Miss W. Then, my lord—[*Hesitating, and confused.*]—the law gave me back, upon my divorce from Sir Robert, the very large fortune which I brought to him.—I am afraid, that, in his present circumstances, to enforce the strict payment of this debt would very much embarrass him.

Lord N. What if it did?

Miss W. It is my entreaty to you (in whose hands is invested the power to demand this right of law) to lay my claim aside for the present. [LORD NORLAND *offers to speak.*] I know, my lord, what you are going to say; I know Sir Robert is not now, but I can never forget that he has been, my husband.

Lord N. To show my gratitude for your compliance with the request I have just made you, [*Goes to a Table in the Library.*] here is the bond by which I am empowered to seize on the greatest part of his estates in right of you: take the bond into your own possession, till your next husband demands it of you; and, for thinking you have called him husband for a few weeks, his tenderness, or delicacy, to Sir Robert, will be thrown away.

Enter HARMONY, *hastily.*

Har. My lord, I beg pardon; but I forgot to mention——

Miss W. Oh, Mr. Harmony, I have not seen you before, I know not when: I am particularly happy at your calling just now, for I have—[*Hesitating.*]—a little favour to ask of you.

Har. If it were a great favour, madam, you might command me.

Miss W. But—my lord, I beg your pardon—the

favour I have to ask of Mr. Harmony must be told to him in private.

Lord N. Oh! I am sure I have not the least objection to you and Mr. Harmony having a private conference. I'll leave you together. [HARMONY *appears embarrassed.*] You do not derange my business—I'll be back in a short time. [*Exit.*

Miss W. Mr. Harmony, you are the very man on earth whom I most wanted to see. [HARMONY *bows.*] I know the kindness of your heart, the liberality of your sentiments, and I wish to repose a charge to your trust, very near to me indeed—but you must be secret.

Har. When a lady reposes a trust in me, I shouldn't be a man if I were not.

Miss W. I must first inform you, that Lord Norland has just drawn from me a promise, that I will once more enter into the marriage state: and without knowing to whom he intends to give me, I will keep my promise. But it is in vain to say, that though I mean all duty and fidelity to my second husband, I shall not experience moments when my thoughts—will wander on my first.

Har. [*Starting.*] Hem!—Hem!—[*To her.*]—Indeed!

Miss W. I must always rejoice in Sir Robert's successes, and lament over his misfortunes.

Har. If that is all—

Miss W. No, I would go one step further: [HARMONY *starts again.*] I would secure him from those distresses, which to hear of, will disturb my peace of mind. I know his fortune has suffered very much, and I cannot, will not, place it in the power of the man, whom my Lord Norland may point out for my next marriage, to harass him farther—This is the writing, by which that gentleman may claim the part of my fortune from Sir Robert Ramble, which

isin landed property; carry it, my dear Mr. Harmony, to Sir Robert instantly; and tell him—that, in separating from him, I meant only to give him liberty, not make him the debtor, perhaps the prisoner, of my future husband.

Har. Madam, I will most undoubtedly take this bond to my friend; but will you give me leave to suggest to you,—that the person on whom you bestow your hand may be a little surprised to find, that while he is in possession of you, Sir Robert is in the possession of your fortune.

Miss W. Do not imagine, sir, that I shall marry any man, without first declaring what I have done—I only wish at present it should be concealed from Lord Norland—When this paper is given, as I have required, it cannot be recalled: and when that is past, I shall divulge my conduct to whom I please: and first of all, to him, who shall offer me his addresses.

Har. And if he is a man of my feelings, his addresses will be doubly importunate for this proof of liberality to your former husband.—But are you sure, that, in the return of this bond, there is no secret affection, no latent spark of love?

Miss W. None. I know my heart; and if there was, I could not ask you, Mr. Harmony (nor any one like you), to be the messenger of an imprudent passion. Sir Robert's vanity, I know, may cause him to judge otherwise; but undeceive him; let him know, this is a sacrifice to the golden principles of duty, and not an offering to the tinselled shrine of love.

Enter LORD NORLAND.

Miss W. Put up the bond.—

[HARMONY *conceals it.*

Lord N. Well, my dear, have you made your request?

Miss W. Yes, my lord.

Lord N. And has he granted it?

Har. Yes, my lord. I am going to grant it.

Lord N. I sincerely wish you both joy of this good understanding between you. But, Mr. Harmony, [*In a Whisper.*] are not you going to Sir Robert?

Har. Yes, my lord, I am going this moment.

Lord N. Make haste, then, and do not forget your errand.

Har. No, my lord, I sha'n't forget my errand: it won't slip my memory—Good morning, my lord:—good morning, madam. [*Exit.*

Lord N. Now, my dear, as you and Mr. Harmony seem to be on such excellent terms, I think I may venture to tell you (if he has not yet told you himself), that he is the man, who is to be your husband.

Miss W. He! Mr. Harmony!—No, my lord, he has not told me; and I am confident he never will.

Lord N. What makes you think so?

Miss W. Because—because—he must be sensible he would not be the man I should chuse.

Lord N. And where is the woman who marries the man she would chuse? you are reversing the order of society; men only have the right of choice in marriage. Were women permitted theirs, we should have handsome beggars allied to our noblest families, and no such object in our whole island as an old maid.

Miss W. But being denied that choice, why am I forbid to remain as I am?

Lord N. What are you now? Neither a widow, a maid, nor a wife. If I could fix a term to your present state, I should not be thus anxious to place you in another.

Miss W. I am perfectly acquainted with your friendly motives, and feel the full force of your advice.—I therefore renew my promise—and although Mr. Harmony (in respect to the marriage state) is as little

to my wishes as any man on earth, I will nevertheless endeavour—whatever struggles it may cost me—to be to him, if he prefers his suit, a dutiful, an obedient—but, for a loving wife, that I can never be again. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at SIR ROBERT RAMBLE'S.

Enter SIR ROBERT, *and* MR. HARMONY.

Sir R. I thank you for this visit. I was undetermined what to do with myself. Your company has determined me to stay at home.

Har. I was with a gentleman just now, Sir Robert, and you were the subject of our conversation.

Sir R. Had it been a lady, I should be anxious to know what she said.

Har. I have been with a lady, likewise: and she made you the subject of her discourse.

Sir R. But was she handsome?

Har. Very handsome.

Sir R. My dear fellow, what is her name? What did she say, and where may I meet with her?

Har. Her name is Wooburn.

Sir R. That is the name of my late wife.

Har. It is her, I mean.

Sir R. Zounds, you had just put my spirits into a flame, and now you throw cold water all over me.

Har. I am sorry to hear you say so, for I came from her this moment;—and what do you think is the present she has given me to deliver to you?

Sir R. Pshaw! I want no presents. Some of my old love-letters returned, I suppose, to remind me of my inconstancy.

Har. Do not undervalue her generosity; this is her present:—this bond, which has power to take from you three thousand a year, her right.

Sir R. Ah! this is a present, indeed! Are you certain you speak truth? Let me look at it;—Sure my eyes deceive me!—No, by Heaven it is true! [*Reads.*] The very thing I wanted, and will make me perfectly happy. Now I'll be generous again; my bills shall be paid, my gaming debts cancelled, poor Irwin shall find a friend; and I'll send Miss Woodburn as pretty a copy of verses as ever I wrote in my life.

Har. Take care how you treat with levity a woman of her elevated mind. She charged me to assure you, that love had no share whatever in the gift, which is mere compassion to the embarrassed state of your affairs.

Sir R. Sir, I would have you to know, I am no object of compassion. However, a lady's favour one cannot return; and so I'll keep this thing.

[*Puts the Bond in his Pocket.*

Har. Nay, if your circumstances are different from what she imagines, give it me back, and I will restore it to her.

Sir R. No, poor thing! it would break her heart to send it back—No, I'll keep it—She would never forgive me, were I to send it back. I'll keep it. And she is welcome to attribute her concern for me to what she pleases. But surely you can see—you can understand—But Heaven bless her for her love! and I would love her in return—if I could.

Har. You would not talk thus, if you had seen the firm dignity with which she gave me that paper—"Assure him," said she, "no remaining affection comes along with it, but merely a duty which I owe him,

to protect him from the humiliation of being a debtor to the man, whom I am going to marry."

Sir R. [*With the utmost Emotion.*] Why, she is not going to be married again!

Har. I believe so.

Sir R. But are you sure of it, sir? Are you sure of it?

Har. Both she and her guardian told me so.

Sir R. That guardian, my Lord Norland, is one of the basest, vilest of men.—I tell you what, sir, I'll resent this usage.

Har. Wherefore?—As to his being the means of bringing about your separation, in that he obliged you.

Sir R. Yes, sir, he did, he certainly did;—but though I am not in the least offended with him on that account (for at that I rejoice), yet I will resent his dispute with me a second time.

Har. And wherefore?

Sir R. Because, little regard as I have for her myself, yet no other man shall dare to treat her so ill as I have done.

Har. Do not fear it—Her next husband will be a man, who, I can safely say, will never insult, or even offend her; but sooth, indulge, and make her happy.

Sir R. And do you dare to tell me, that her next husband shall make her happy? Now that is worse than the other—No, sir, no man shall ever have it to say, he has made her either happy or miserable, but myself.

Har. I know of but one way to prevent it.

Sir R. And what is that?

Har. Pay your addresses to her, and marry her again yourself.

Sir R. And I would, rather than she should be happy with any body else.

Har. To show that I am wholly disinterested in this affair, I will carry her a letter from you, if you like, and say all I can in your behalf.

Sir R. Ha! ha! ha! Now, my dear Harmony, you carry your goodnatured simplicity too far. However, I thank you—I sincerely thank you—But do you imagine I should be such a blockhead, as to make love to the same woman I made love to seven years ago, and who for the last six years I totally neglected?

Har. Yes; for if you have neglected her six years, she will now be a novelty.

Sir R. Egad, and so she will. You are right.

Har. But being in possession of her fortune, you can be very happy without her.

Sir R. Take her fortune back, sir. [*Taking the Bond from his Pocket, and offering it to* HARMONY.] I would starve, I would perish, die in poverty, and infamy, rather than owe an obligation to a vile, perfidious, inconstant woman.

Har. Consider, Sir Robert, if you insist on my taking this bond back, it may fall into the husband's hands.

Sir R. Take it back—I insist upon it. [*Gives it him, and* HARMONY *puts it up.*] But, Mr. Harmony, depend on it, Lord Norland shall hear from me, in the most serious manner, for his interference—I repeat, he is the vilest, the most villanous of men.

Har. How can you speak with such rancour of a nobleman, who speaks of you in the highest terms?

Sir R. Does he, 'faith?

Har. He owns you have some faults.

Sir R. I know I have.

Har. But he thinks your good qualities are numberless.

Sir R. Now, dam'me if ever I thought so ill of him as I have appeared to do!—But who is the intended husband, my dear friend? Tell me, that I may laugh at him, and make you laugh at him.

Har. No, I am not inclined to laugh at him.

Sir R. Is it old Solus?

Har. No.

Sir R. But I will bet you a wager it is somebody equally ridiculous.

Har. I never bet.

Sir R. Solus is mad for a wife, and has been praising mine up to the heavens,—you need say no more —I know it is he.

Har. Upon my honour, it is not. However, I cannot disclose to you at present the person's name; I must first obtain Lord Norland's permission.

Sir R. I shall ask you no more. I'll write to her, she will tell me;—or I'll pay her a visit, and ask her boldly myself.——Do you think [*Anxiously.*]—do you think she would see me!

Har. You can but try.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Solus.

Sir R. Now I will find out the secret immediately. —I'll charge him with being the intended husband.

Har. I won't stay to hear you.

Enter SOLUS.

Mr. Solus, how do you do? I am extremely sorry that my engagements take me away as soon as you enter.

[*Exit* HARMONY, *running, to avoid an Explanation.*

Sol. Sir Robert, what is the matter? Has any thing ruffled you? Why, I never saw you look more out of temper, even while you were married.

Sir R. Ah! that I had never married! never known what marriage was! for, even at this moment, I feel its torments in my heart.

Sol. I have often heard of the torments of matri-

43269

mony; but I conceive, that at the worst, they are nothing more than a kind of violent tickling, which will force the tears into your eyes, though at the same time you are bursting your sides with laughter.

Sir R. You have defined marriage too favourably; there is no laughter in the state; all is melancholy, all gloom.

Sol. Now I think marriage is an excellent remedy for the spleen. I have known a gentleman at a feast receive an affront, disguise his rage, step home, vent it all upon his wife, return to his companions, and be as good company as if nothing had happened.

Sir R. But even the necessary expenses of a wife should alarm you.

Sol. I can then retrench some of my own. Oh! my dear sir, a married man has so many delightful privileges to what a bachelor has;—An old lady will introduce her daughters to you in a dishabille—"It does not signify, my dears, it's a married man"—One lady will suffer you to draw on her glove—"Never mind, it's a married man"—Another will permit you to pull on her slipper; a third will even take you into her bedchamber—"Pshaw, it's *nothing* but a married man."

Sir R. But the weight of your fetters will overbalance all these joys.

Sol. And I cannot say, notwithstanding you are relieved from those fetters, that I see much joy or content here.

Sir R. I am not very well at present; I have the head-ache; and, if ever a wife can be of comfort to her husband, it must be when he is indisposed. A wife, then, binds up your head, mixes your powders, bathes your temples, and hovers about you, in a way that is most endearing.

Sol. Don't speak of it; I long to have one hover about me. But I will—I am determined I will, before I am a week older. Don't speak, don't attempt

to persuade me not. Your description has renewed my eagerness—I will be married.

Sir R. And without pretending not to know whom you mean to make your choice, I tell you plainly, it is Miss Wooburn, it is my late wife.—I know you have made overtures to my Lord Norland, and that he has given his consent.

Sol. You tell me a great piece of news—I'll go ask my lord if it be true; and if he says it is, I shall be very glad to find it so.

Sir R. That is right, sir; marry her, marry her;—I give you joy,—that's all.—Ha! ha! ha! I think I should know her temper.—But if you will venture to marry her, I sincerely wish you happy.

Sol. And if we are not, you know we can be divorced.

Sir R. Not always. Take my advice, and live as you are.

Sol. You almost stagger my resolution.—I had painted such bright prospects in marriage:—Good day to you. [*Going, returns.*]—You think I had better not marry?

Sir R. You are undone if you do.

Sol. [*Sighing.*] You ought to know from experience.

Sir R. From that I speak.

Sol. [*Going to the Door, and returning once or twice, as undetermined in his Resolution.*] But then, what a poor, disconsolate object shall I live, without a wife to hover about me; to bind up my head, and bathe my temples! Oh! I am impatient for all the chartered rights, privileges, and immunities of a married man. [*Exit.*

Sir R. Furies! racks! torments!—I cannot bear what I feel, and yet I am ashamed to own I feel any thing!

Enter MR. PLACID.

Plac. My dear Sir Robert, give me joy! Mrs. Placid and I are come to the very point you advised: matters are in the fairest way for a separation.

Sir R. I do give you joy, and most sincerely.—You are right; you will soon be as happy as I am. [*Sighing.*] But, would you suppose it? that deluded woman, my wife, is going to be married again! I thought she had experienced enough from me.

Plac. You are hurt, I see, lest the world should say, she has forgot you.

Sir R. She cannot forget me; I defy her to forget me.

Plac. Who is her intended husband?

Sir R. Solus, Solus. An old man—an ugly man. He left me this moment, and owned it—owned it! Go after him, will you, and persuade him not to have her.

Plac. My advice will have no effect, for you know he is determined upon matrimony.

Sir R. Then could not you, my dear sir (as you are going to be separated,) could not you recommend him to marry your wife?—It will be all the same to him, and I shall like it much better.

Plac. Ours will not be a divorce, consider, but merely a separate maintenance. But were it otherwise, I wish no man so ill, as to wish him married to Mrs. Placid.

Sir R. That is my case exactly—I wish no man so ill, as to wish him married to my Lady Ramble; and poor old Solus in particular, poor old man! a very good sort of man—I have a great friendship for Solus.—I can't stay a moment in the house—I must go somewhere—I'll go to Solus—No, I'll go to Lord Notland—No, I'd go to Harmony; and then I'll

call on you, and we'll take a bottle together; and when you are become free [*Takes his Hand.*] we'll both join, from that moment we'll join, to laugh at, to contemn, to despise, all those who boast of the joys of conjugal love. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. HARMONY'S.

Enter MR. HARMONY.

Har. And now for one of the most painful tasks that brotherly love ever draws upon me; to tell another the suit, of which I gave him hope, has failed.—Yet, if I can but overcome Captain Irwin's delicacy so far, as to prevail on him to accept one proof more of my good wishes towards him;—but to a man of his nice sense of obligations, the offer must be made with caution.

Enter LORD NORLAND.

Lord N. Mr. Harmony, I beg your pardon: I come in thus abruptly, from the anxiety I feel concerning what passed between us this morning in respect to Miss Woodburn. You have not changed your mind, I hope?

Har. Indeed, my lord, I am very sorry that it will not be in my power to oblige you.

Lord N. [*In Anger.*] How, sir? Did not you give me your word?

Har. Only conditionally, my lord.

Lord N. And what were the conditions?

Har. Have you forgot them? Her former husband—

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Robert Ramble is in his carriage at the door, and, if you are at leisure, will come in.

Har. Desire him to walk up. I have your leave, I suppose, my lord? [*Exit* SERVANT.

Lord N. Yes; but let me get out of the house without meeting him. [*Going to the opposite Door.*] Can I go this way?

Har. Why should you shun him?

Lord N. Because he used his wife ill.

Har. He did. But I believe he is very sorry for it. —And as for you,—he said to me only a few hours ago—but no matter.

Lord N. What did he say? I insist upon knowing.

Har. Why, then, he said, that if he had a sacred trust to repose in any one, you should be the man on earth, to whom he would confide it.

Lord N. Well, I am in no hurry; I can stay a few minutes.

Enter SIR ROBERT RAMBLE.

Sir R. Oh! Harmony! I am in such a distracted state of mind—

[*Seeing* LORD NORLAND, *he starts, and bows with the most humble Respect.*

Lord N. Sir Robert, how do you do?

Sir R. My lord, I am pretty well.—I hope I have the happiness of seeing your lordship in perfect health.

Lord N. Very well, sir, I thank you.

Sir R. Indeed, my lord, I think I never saw you look better.

Lord N. Mr. Harmony, you and Sir Robert may have some business—I wish you a good morning.

Har. No, my lord, I fancy Sir Robert has nothing particular.

Sir R. Nothing, nothing, I assure you, my lord.

Lord N. However, I have business myself in another place, and so you will excuse me. [*Going.*

Sir R. [*Following him.*] My lord—Lord Norland,—I trust you will excuse my inquiries.—I hope, my lord, all your family are well?

Lord N. All very well.

Sir R. Your little élève,—Master Edward,—the young gentleman you have adopted—I hope he is well—[*Hesitating and Confused.*] And—your ward,—Miss Wooburn—I hope, my lord, she is well?

Lord N. Yes, Sir Robert, Miss Wooburn is tolerably well.

Sir R. Only tolerably, my lord? I am sorry for that.

Har. I hope, my lord, you will excuse my mentioning the subject; but I was telling Sir Robert just now of your intentions respecting a second marriage for that lady; but Sir Robert does not appear to approve of the design.

Lord N. What objection can he have?

Sir R. My lord, there are such a number of bad husbands;—there are such a number of dissipated, unthinking, unprincipled men!—And—I should be extremely sorry to see any lady with whom I have had the honour of being so closely allied, united to a man, who would undervalue her worth.

Lord N. Pray, Sir Robert, were you not then extremely sorry for her, while she was united to you?

Sir R. Very sorry for her, indeed, my lord. But, at that time, my mind was so much taken up with other cares, I own I did not feel the compassion which

was her due; but, now that I am single, I shall have leisure to pay her more attention; and should I find her unhappy, it must, inevitably, make me so.

Lord N. Depend upon it, that, on the present occasion, I shall take infinite care in the choice of her husband.

Sir R. If your lordship would permit me to have an interview with Miss Wooburn, I think I should be able at least—

Lord N. You would not sure insult her by your presence?

Sir R. I think I should be able at least to point out an object worthy of her taste—I know that which she will like better than any one in the world.

Lord N. Her request has been, that I may point her out a husband the reverse of you.

Sir R. Then, upon my honour, my lord, she won't like him.

Lord N. Have not you liked women the reverse of her?

Sir R. Yes, my lord, perhaps I have, and perhaps I still do. I do not pretend to love her; I did not say, I did; nay, I positively protest I do not; but this indifference I acknowledge as one of my faults; and, notwithstanding all my faults, give me leave to acknowledge my gratitude that your lordship has nevertheless been pleased to declare—you think my virtues are numberless. [LORD NORLAND *shows Surprise.*

Hur. [*Aside to* SIR ROBERT.] Hush, hush!—Don't talk of your virtues now.

Lord N. Sir Robert, to all your incoherent language, this is my answer, this is my will: the lady, to whom I have had the honour to be guardian, shall never (while she calls me friend) see you more.

[SIR ROBERT, *at this Sentence, stands silent for some Time, then, suddenly recollecting himself:*

Sir R. Lord Norland, I am too well acquainted with the truth of your word, and the firmness of your temper, to press my suit one sentence farther.

Lord N. I commend your discernment.

Sir R. My lord, I feel myself a little embarrassed.—I am afraid I have made myself a little ridiculous upon this occasion—Will your lordship do me the favour to forget it?

Lord N. I will forget whatever you please.

Har. [*Following him, whispers.*] I am sorry to see you going away in despair.

Sir R. I never did despair in my life, sir; and while a woman is the object of my wishes, I never will.

[*Exit.*

Lord N. What did he say?

Har. That he thought your conduct, that of a just and an upright man.

Lord N. To say the truth, he has gone away with better manners than I could have imagined, considering his jealousy is provoked.

Har. Ah! I always knew he loved his wife, notwithstanding his behaviour to her; for, if you remember—he always spoke well of her behind her back.

Lord N. No, I do not remember it.

Har. Yes, he did; and that is the only criterion of a man's love, or of his friendship.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A young gentleman is at the door, sir, inquiring for Lord Norland.

Lord N. Who can it be?

Har. Your young gentleman from home, I dare say. Desire him to walk in. Bring him here.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Lord N. What business can he have to follow me?

Enter EDWARD.

Edw. Oh, my lord, I beg your pardon for coming hither, but I come to tell you something you will be glad to hear.

Har. Good Heaven, how like his mother!

Lord N. [*Taking him by the Hand.*] I begin to think he is—But he was not so when I first took him. No, no, if he had, he would not have been thus near me now;—but to turn him away because his countenance is a little changed, I think would not be right.

Edw. [*To* HARMONY.] Pray, sir, did you know my mother?

Har. I have seen her.

Edw. Did you ever see her, my lord?

Lord N. I thought, you had orders never to inquire about your parents?—Have you forgot those orders?

Edw. No, my lord;—but when this gentleman said, I was like my mother—it put me in mind of her.

Har. You do not remember your mother, do you?

Edw. Sometimes I think I do. I think sometimes I remember her kissing me, when she and my father went on board of a ship; and so hard she pressed me—I think I feel it now.

Har. Perhaps she was the only lady that ever saluted you?

Edw. No, sir, not by many.

Lord N. But, pray, young man, (to have done with this subject,) what brought you here? You seem to have forgot your errand?

Edw. And so I had, upon my word. Speaking of my mother, put it quite out of my mind.—But, my

lord, I came to let you know, the robber, who stopped you last night, is taken.

Lord N. I am glad to hear it.

Edw. I knew you would, and therefore I begged to be the first to tell you.

Har. [*To* LORD NORLAND.] Should you know the person again?

Lord N. I cannot say, I should; his face seemed so much distorted.

Har. Ay, wretched man! I suppose, with terror.

Lord N. No; it appeared a different passion from fear.

Har. Perhaps, my lord, it was your fear, that made you think so.

Lord N. No, sir, I was not frightened.

Edw. Then, why did you give him your money?

Lord N. It was surprise, caused me to do that.

Edw. I wondered what it was! You said it was not fear, and I was sure it could not be love.

Har. How has he been taken?

Edw. A person came to our steward, and informed against him——and, Oh! my lord, his poor wife told the officers, who took him, they had met with misfortunes, which she feared had caused a fever in her husband's head: and, indeed, they found him too ill to be removed; and so, she hoped, she said, that, as a man not in his perfect mind, you would be merciful to him.

Lord N. I will be just.

Edw. And that is being merciful, is it not, my lord?

Lord N. Not always.

Edw. I thought it had been.—It is not just to be unmerciful, is it?

Lord N. Certainly not.

Edw. Then it must be just, to have mercy.

Lord N. You draw a false conclusion.——Great

as the virtue of mercy is, justice is greater still.—Justice holds its place among those cardinal virtues, which include all the lesser.—Come, Mr. Harmony, will you go home with me? And, before I attend to this business, let me persuade you to forget there is such a person in the world as Sir Robert Ramble, and suffer me to introduce you to Miss Wooburn, as the man who——

Har. I beg to be excused—Besides the consideration of Sir Robert, I have another reason why I cannot go with you.—The melancholy tale, which this young gentleman has been telling, has cast a gloom on my spirits, which renders me unfit for the society of a lady.

Lord N. Now I should not be surprised, were you to go in search of this culprit and his family, and come to me to intreat me to forego the prosecution; but, before you ask me, I tell you it is in vain—I will not.

Har. Lord Norland, I have lately been so unsuccessful in my petitions to you, I shall never presume to interpose between your rigour and a weak sufferer more.

Lord N. Plead the cause of the good, and I will listen; but you find none but the wicked for your compassion.

Har. The good, in all states, even in the very grasp of death, are objects of envy; it is the bad who are the only sufferers. There, where no internal consolation cheers, who can refuse a little external comfort? —And, let me tell you, my lord, that, amidst all your authority, your state, your grandeur, I often pity you. [*Speaking with unaffected Compassion.*

Lord N. Good day, Mr. Harmony; and when you have apologized for what you have said, we may be friends again.

[*Exit, leading off* EDWARD.

Har. Nay, hear my apology now. I cannot—no, it is not in my nature, to live in resentment, nor under the resentment of any creature in the world.

[*Exit, following* LORD NORLAND.

SCENE II.

An Apartment at LORD NORLAND'S.

Enter SIR ROBERT RAMBLE, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Sir R. Do not say who it is—but say, a gentleman, who has some particular business with her.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Going.*

Sir R. Pray,—[SERVANT *returns.*] You have but lately come into this service, I believe?

Serv. Only a few days, sir.

Sir R. You don't know me, then?

Serv. No, sir.

Sir R. I am very glad of it. So much the better. ——Go to Miss Wooburn, with a stranger's compliments, who is waiting, and who begs to speak with her, upon an affair of importance.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir R. I wish I may die, if I don't feel very unaccountably! How different are our sensations towards our wives, and all other women! This is the very first time she has given me a palpitation since the honeymoon.

Enter MISS WOOBURN, *who starts on seeing* SIR ROBERT;—*he bows in great Confusion.*

Miss W. Support me Heaven! [*Aside.*

Sir R. [*Bows repeatedly, and does not speak till after many Efforts.*] Was ever man in such confusion before his wife! [*Aside.*

Miss W. Sir Robert, having recovered, in some measure, from the surprise into which this intrusion first threw me, I have only to say,—that, whatever pretence may have induced you to offer me this insult, there is not any that can oblige me to bear with it. [*Going.*

Sir R. Lady Ramb—[*Recalling himself.*] Mis Woo—[*She turns.*] Lady Ramble—[*Recalling himself again.*] Miss Wooburn—Madam—You wrong me——There was a time when I insulted you, I confess; but it is impossible that time should ever return.

Miss W. While I stay with you, I incur the danger. [*Going.*

Sir R. [*Holding her.*] Nay, listen to me, as a friend, whom you have so often heard as an enemy.—You offered me a favour by the hands of Mr. Harmony——

Miss W. And is this the motive of your visit—this the return—

Sir R. No, madam, that obligation was not the motive which drew me hither—The real cause of this seeming intrusion is—you are going to be married once more, and I come to warn you of your danger.

Miss W. That you did sufficiently in the marriage state.

Sir R. But now I come to offer you advice, that may be of the most material consequence, should you really be determined to yield yourself again into the power of a husband.

Miss W. Which I most assuredly am.

Sir R. Happy, happy man! How much is he the object of my envy! None so well as I, know how to envy him, because none so well as I, know how to value you. [*She offers to go.*] Nay, by Heaven, you

shall not go, till you have heard all that I came to say!

Miss W. Speak it then, instantly.

Sir R. No, it would take whole ages to speak; and should we live together, as long as we have lived together, still I should not find time to tell you—how much I love you.

[*A loud Rapping at the Street Door.*

Miss W. That, I hope, is Lord Norland.

Sir R. And what has Lord Norland to do with souls free as ours? Let us go to Scotland again: and again bid defiance to his stern commands.

Miss W. Be assured, that through him only, will I ever listen to a syllable you have to utter.

Sir R. One syllable only, and I am gone that instant.

Miss W. Well, sir?

[*He hesitates, trembles, seems to struggle with himself; then approaching her slowly, timidly, and, as if ashamed of his Humiliation, kneels to her—She turns away.*

Sir R. [*Kneeling.*] Maria, Maria, look at me!—Look at me in this humble state—Could you have suspected this, Maria?

Miss W. No: nor can I conceive what this mockery means.

Sir R. It means, that, now you are no longer my wife, you are my goddess; and thus I offer you my supplication, that, (if you are resolved not to live single) amongst the numerous train who present their suit,—you will once more select me.

Miss W. You!—You, who have treated me with cruelty; who made no secret of your love for others; but gloried, boasted of your gallantries.

Sir R. I did, I did—But here I swear, only trust me again—do but once more trust me, and I swear by all I hold most sacred, that I will, for the future, carefully conceal all my gallantries from your know-

ledge—though they were ten times more frequent than before.

Enter EDWARD.

Edw. Oh, my dear Miss Wooburn—What! Sir Robert here too! [*Goes to* SIR ROBERT, *and shakes Hands.*] How do you do, Sir Robert? Who would have thought of seeing you here? I am glad to see you, though, with all my heart; and so, I dare say, is Miss Wooburn, though she may not like to say so.

Miss W. You are impertinent, sir.

Edw. What, for coming in? I will go away then.

Sir R. Do, do—there's a good boy—do.

Edw. [*Going, returns.*] I cannot help laughing, though, to see you two together!—for you know you never were together when you lived in the same house.

Sir R. Leave the room instantly, sir, or I shall call Lord Norland.

Edw. Oh, don't take that trouble; I will call him myself. [*Runs to the Door.*] My lord! my lord! pray come hither this moment—As I am alive, here is Sir Robert Ramble along with Lady Ramble!

Enter LORD NORLAND.

[SIR ROBERT *looks confounded*—LORD NORLAND *points to* EDWARD *to leave the Room.*

[*Exit* EDWARD.

Lord N. Sir Robert, on what pretence do you come hither?

Sir R. On the same pretence as when I was, for the first time, admitted into your house; to solicit this lady's hand: and, after having had it once, no force shall compel me to take a refusal.

Lord N. I will try, however—Madam, quit the room instantly.

Sir R. My lord, she shall not quit it.

Lord N. I command her to go.

Sir R. And I command her to stay.

Lord N. Which of us will you obey?

Miss W. My inclination, my lord, disposes me to obey you;—but I have so lately been accustomed to obey him; that custom inclines me to obey him still.

Sir R. There! there! there, my lord! Now I hope you will understand better for the future, and not attempt to interfere between a man and his wife?

Lord N. [*To* Miss Woodburn.] Be explicit in your answer to this question——Will you consent to be his wife?

Miss W. No, never.

Sir R. Zounds, my lord! now you are hurrying matters.—You should do it by gentle means;—let me ask her gently.—[*With a most soft Voice.*] Maria, Maria, will you be my wife once again?

Miss W. Never.

Sir R. So you said seven years ago, when I asked you, and yet you consented.

Lord N. And now, Sir Robert, you have had your answer; leave my house. [*Going up to him.*

Sir R. Yes, sir; but not without my other half.

Lord N. Your other half?

Sir R. Yes; the wife of my bosom—the wife, whom I swore at the altar "to love and to cherish, and, forsaking all others, cleave only to her, as long as we both should live."

Lord N. You broke your oath, and made the contract void.

Sir R. But I am ready to take another oath, and another after that, and another after that—And, Oh! my dear Maria, be propitious to my vows, and give me hopes you will again be mine.

[*He goes to her, and kneels in the most supplicating Attitude.*

Enter EDWARD, *showing in* MR. SOLUS *and* MR. PLACID; EDWARD *points to* SIR ROBERT (*who has his Back to them*) *and goes off.*

Sir R. [*Still on his Knees, and not perceiving their Entrance.*] I cannot live without you.—Receive your penitent husband, thus humbly acknowledging his faults, and imploring you to accept him once again.

Sol. [*Going up to* SIR ROBERT.] Now, is it wonderful that I should want a wife?

Plac. And is it to be wondered at, if I should hesitate about parting with mine?

Sir R. [*Starts up in great Confusion.*] Mr. Solus, Mr. Placid, I am highly displeased that my private actions should be thus inspected.

Sol. No one shall persuade me now, to live a day without a wife.

Plac. And no one shall persuade me now, not to be content with my own.

Sol. I will procure a special licence, and marry the first woman I meet.

Sir R. Mr. Solus, you are, I believe, interested in a peculiar manner, about the marriage of this lady.

Sol. And, poor man, you are sick, and want somebody to bathe your temples, and to hover about you.

Miss W. You come in most opportunely, my dear Mr. Solus, to be a witness——

Sir R. My dear Mr. Solus!

Sol. To be a witness, madam, that a man is miserable without a wife. I have been a fatal instance of that, for some time.

Miss W. Come to me, then, and receive a lesson.

Sir R. No, madam, he shall not come to you; nor shall he receive a lesson. No one shall receive a lesson from you, but myself.

Lord N. Sir Robert, one would suppose, by this extraordinary behaviour, you were jealous.

Sir R. And so I am, my lord; I have cause to be so.

Lord N. No cause to be jealous of Mr. Solus—he is not Miss Wooburn's lover, I assure you.

Sir R. Then, my lord, I verily believe it is yourself. Yes, I can see it is; I can see it in her eyes, and by every feature in your face.

Miss W. Oh! my good friend, Mr. Placid, only listen to him.

Sir R. And why, my good friend, Mr. Placid?—[*To* PLACID.] By Heavens, sir, I believe that you only wished to get rid of your own wife, in order to marry mine.

Plac. I do not wish to part with my own wife, Sir Robert, since what I have just seen.

Sir R. [*Going up to* SOLUS *and* LORD NORLAND.] Then, pray, gentlemen, be so good as to tell me, which of you two is the happy man, that I may know how to conduct myself towards him?

Miss W. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir R. Do you insult me, Maria?—Oh! have pity on my sufferings.

Sol. If you have a mind to kneel down again, we will go out of the room.

Plac. Just as I was comforting myself with the prospect of a divorce, I find my instructor and director pleading on his knees to be remarried.

Enter MRS. PLACID, *who steals upon* MR. PLACID *unperceived*

Mrs. P. What were you saying about a divorce?

Sir R. Now, down on your knees, and beg pardon.

Miss W. My dear Mrs. Placid, if this visit is to me, I take it very kind.

Mrs. P. Not absolutely to you, my dear. I saw

Mr. Placid's carriage at the door, and so I stepped in to desire him to go home directly.

Plac. Presently, my dear; I will go presently.

Mrs. P. Presently won't do: I say, directly. There is a lady at my house in the greatest possible distress—[*Whispers him.*]—Lady Eleanor—I never saw a creature in such distraction; [*Raising her Voice.*] therefore go home this moment; you shan't stay an instant longer.

Sol. Egad, I don't know whether I will marry or no.

Mrs. P. Why don't you go, Mr. Placid, when I bid you?

Sol. No;—I think I won't marry.

Plac. But, my dear, will not you go home with me?

Mrs. P. Did not I tell you to go by yourself?

[PLACID *bows, and goes off.*

Sol. No;—I am sure I won't marry.

Lord N. And now, Mr. Solus and Sir Robert, these ladies may have some private conversation. Do me the favour to leave them alone.

Miss W. My lord, with your leave, we will retire. [*Turns when she gets to the Door.*] Sir Robert, I have remained in your company, and compelled myself to the painful task of hearing all you have had to say, merely for the satisfaction of exposing your love; and then enjoying the triumph, of bidding you farewell for ever. [*Exit with* MRS. PLACID.

Sol. [*Looking stedfastly at* SIR ROBERT.] He turns pale at the thoughts of losing her. Yes, I think I'll marry.

Lord N. Come, Sir Robert, it is in vain to loiter; your doom is fixed.

Sir R. [*In a melancholy, musing Tone.*] Shall I then never again know what it is to have a heart like hers, to repose my troubles on.

Sol. Yes, I am pretty sure I'll marry.

Sir R. —A friend in all my anxieties, a companion in all my pleasures, a physician in all my sicknesses——

Sol. Yes, I will marry.

Lord N. Come, come, Sir Robert, do not let you and I have any dispute.

[*Leading him towards the Door.*

Sir R. Senseless man, not to value those blessings —Not to know how to estimate them, till they were lost. [LORD NORLAND *leads him off.*

Sol. [*Following.*] Yes,—I am determined;—nothing shall prevent me—I will be married. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at LORD NORLAND'S.

Enter HAMMOND, *followed by* LADY ELEANOR.

Ham. My lord is busily engaged, madam; I do not suppose he would see any one, much less a stranger.

Lady E. I am no stranger.

Ham. Your name then, madam?

Lady E. That I cannot send in. But tell him, sir, I am the afflicted wife of a man, who, for some weeks past, has given many fatal proofs of a disordered mind. In one of those fits of phrensy, he held an

instrument of death, meant for his own destruction, to the breast of your lord (who by accident that moment passed,) and took from him, what he vainly hoped might preserve his own life, and relieve the wants of his family. But, his paroxysm over, he shrunk from what he had done, and gave the whole he had thus unwarrantably taken, into a servant's hands, to be returned to its lawful owner. The man, admitted to this confidence, betrayed his trust, and instead of giving up what was thus sacredly delivered to him, secreted it; and, to obtain the promised reward, came to this house, but to inform against the wretched offender; who now, only resting on your lord's clemency, can escape the direful fate he has incurred.

Ham. Madam, the account you give, makes me interested in your behalf, and you may depend, I will repeat it all with the greatest exactness.

[*Exit* HAMMOND.

Lady E. [*Looking round.*] This is my father's house! It is only through two rooms and one short passage, and there he is sitting in his study. Oh! in that study, where I (even in the midst of all his business) have been so often welcome; where I have urged the suit of many an unhappy person, nor ever urged in vain. Now I am not permitted to speak for myself, nor have one friendly voice to do that office for me, which I have so often undertaken for others.

Enter HAMMOND, EDWARD *following.*

Ham. My lord says, that any petition concerning the person you come about, is of no use. His respect for the laws of his country demands an example such as he means to make.

Lady E. Am I, am I to despair then? [*To* HAMMOND.] Dear sir, would you go once more to him, and humbly represent——

Ham. I should be happy to oblige you, but I dare not take any more messages to my lord; he has given me my answer.—If you will give me leave, madam, I'll see you to the door.

[*Crosses to the other Side, and goes off.*

Lady E. Misery—Distraction!—Oh, Mr. Placid! Oh, Mr. Harmony! Are these the hopes you gave me, could I have the boldness to enter this house? But you would neither of you undertake to bring me here!—neither of you undertake to speak for me!

[*She is following the* SERVANT; EDWARD *walks softly after her, till she gets near the Door; he then takes hold of her Gown, and gently pulls it; she turns and looks at him.*

Edw. Shall I speak for you, madam?

Lady E. Who are you, pray, young gentleman?—Is it you, whom Lord Norland has adopted for his son?

Edw. I believe he has, madam; but he has never told me so yet.

Lady E. I am obliged to you for your offer; but my suit is of too much consequence for you to undertake.

Edw. I know what your suit is, madam, because I was with my lord when Hammond brought in your message; and I was so sorry for you, I came out on purpose to see you—and, without speaking to my lord, I could do you a great kindness—if I durst.

Lady E. What kindness?

Edw. But I durst not—No, do not ask me.

Lady E. I do not. But you have increased my anxiety, and in a mind so distracted as mine, it is cruel to excite one additional pain.

Edw. I am sure I would not add to your grief for the world.—But then, pray do not speak of what I am going to say.—I heard my lord's lawyer tell him just now, that, as he said he should not know the person again, who committed the offence about which you came, and as the man who informed against him is

gone off, there could be no evidence that he did the action, but from a book, a particular pocketbook, of my lord's, which he forgot to deliver to his servant with the notes and money he returned, and which was found upon him at your house: and this Lord Norland will affirm to be his.—Now, if I did not think I was doing wrong, this is the very book—[*Takes a Pocketbook from his Pocket.*] I took it from my lord's table;—but it would be doing wrong, or I am sure I wish you had it. [*Looking wishfully at her.*

Lady E. It will save my life, my husband's, and my children's.

Edw. [*Trembling.*] But what is to become of me?

Lady E. That Providence who never punishes the deed, unless the will be an accomplice, shall protect you, for saving one, who has only erred in a moment of distraction.

Edw. I never did any thing to offend my lord in my life;—and I am in such fear of him, I did not think I ever should.—Yet I cannot refuse you;—take it.—[*Gives her the Book.*] But pity me, when my lord shall know of it.

Lady E. Oh! should he discard you for what you have done, it will embitter every moment of my remaining life.

Edw. Do not frighten yourself about that.—I think he loves me too well to discard me quite.

Lady E. Does he indeed?

Edw. I think he does!—for often, when we are alone, he presses me to his bosom so fondly, you would not suppose.—And, when my poor nurse died, she called me to her bedside, and told me (but pray keep it a secret)—she told me I was—his grandchild.

Lady E. You are—you are his grandchild—I see, —I feel you are;—for I feel that I am your mother. [*Embraces him.*] Oh! take this evidence back. [*Returning the Book.*]—I cannot receive it from thee, my child;—no, let us all perish, rather than my boy, my

only boy, should do an act to stain his conscience, or to lose his grandfather's love.

Edw. What do you mean?

Lady E. The name of the person with whom you lived in your infancy, was Heyland?

Edw. It was.

Lady E. I am your mother; Lord Norland's only child, [EDWARD *kneels.*] who, for one act of disobedience, have been driven to another part of the globe in poverty, and forced to leave you, my life, behind. [*She embraces and raises him.*] Your father, in his struggles to support us all, has fallen a victim;—but Heaven, which has preserved my son, will save my husband, restore his senses, and once more——

Edw. [*Starting.*] I hear my lord's step,—he is coming this way:—Begone, mother, or we are all undone.

Lady E. No, let him come—for though his frown should kill me, yet must I thank him, for his care of thee. [*She advances towards the Door, to meet him.*

Enter LORD NORLAND.

[LADY E. *falls on her Knees.*] You love me,—'tis in vain to say you do not. You love my child; and with whatever hardship you have dealt, or still mean to deal by me, I will never cease to think you love me, nor ever cease my gratitude for your goodness.

Lord N. Where are my servants? Who let this woman in?

[*She rises, and retreats from him, alarmed and confused.*

Edw. Oh, my lord, pity her.—Do not let me see her hardly treated—Indeed I cannot bear it.

Enter HAMMOND.

Lord N. [*To* LADY ELEANOR.] What was your

errand here? If to see your child, take him away with you.

Lady E. I came to see my father;—I have a house too full of such as he already.

Lord N. How did she gain admittance?

Ham. With a petition, which I repeated to your lordship. [*Exit* HAMMOND.

Lord N. Her husband, then, it was, who—[*To* LADY ELEANOR.] But let him know, for this boy's sake, I will no longer pursue him.

Lady E. For that boy's sake you will not pursue his father; but for whose sake are you so tender of that boy? 'Tis for mine, for my sake; and by that I conjure you— [*Offers to kneel.*

Lord N. Your prayers are vain—[*To* EDWARD.] Go, take leave of your mother for ever, and instantly follow me;—or shake hands with me for the last time, and instantly begone with her.

Edw. [*Stands between them in doubt for some little Time; looks alternately at each with Emotions of Affection; at last goes to his Grandfather, and takes hold of his Hand.*] Farewell, my lord,—it almost breaks my heart to part from you;—but if I have my choice, I must go with my mother.

[*Exit* LORD NORLAND *instantly.*—LADY ELEANOR *and her Son go off on the opposite Side.*

SCENE II.

Another Apartment at LORD NORLAND'S.

Enter MISS WOODBURN *and* MRS. PLACID.

Mrs. P. Well, my dear, farewell.—I have stayed a great while longer than I intended—I certainly forgot to tell Mr. Placid to come back after he had

spoken with Lady Eleanor, or he would not have taken the liberty not to have come.

Miss W. How often have I lamented the fate of Lord Norland's daughter! But, luckily, I have no personal acquaintance with her, or I should probably feel a great deal more on her account than I do at present.—She had quitted her father's house before I came to it.

Enter MR. HARMONY.

Har. My whole life is passed in endeavouring to make people happy, and yet they won't let me do it. —I flattered myself, that after I had resigned all pretensions to you, Miss Wooburn, in order to accommodate Sir Robert—that, after I had told both my lord and him, in what high estimation they stood in each other's opinion, they would of course have been friends; or, at least not have come to any desperate quarrel:—instead of which, what have they done, but, within this hour, had a duel!—and poor Sir Robert—

Miss W. For Heaven's sake, tell me of Sir Robert——

Har. You were the only person he mentioned after he received his wound; and such encomiums as he uttered——

Miss W. Good Heaven! If he is in danger, it will be vain to endeavour to conceal what I shall suffer.

[*Retires a few Paces, to hide her Emotions.*

Mrs. P. Was my husband there?

Har. He was one of the seconds.

Mrs. P. Then he shall not stir out of his house this month, for it.

Har. He is not likely; for he is hurt too.

Mrs. P. A great deal hurt?

Har. Don't alarm yourself.

Mrs. P. I don't.

Har. Nay, if you had heard what he said!

Mrs. P. What did he say?

Har. How tenderly he spoke of you to all his friends——

Mrs. P. But what did he say?

Har. He said, you had imperfections.

Mrs. P. Then he told a falsehood.

Har. But he acknowledged they were such as only evinced a superior understanding to the rest of your sex;—and that your heart——

Mrs. P. [*Bursting into Tears.*] I am sure I am very sorry that any misfortune has happened to him, poor, silly man! But I don't suppose [*Drying up her Tears at once.*] he'll die.

Har. If you will behave kindly to him, I should suppose not.

Mrs. P. Mr. Harmony, if Mr. Placid is either dying or dead, I shall behave with very great tenderness; but if I find him alive, and likely to live, I will lead him such a life as he has not led a long time.

Har. Then you mean to be kind?—But, my dear Miss Wooburn, [*Going to her.*] why this seeming grief? Sir Robert is still living; and should he die of his wounds, you may at least console yourself, that it was not your cruelty which killed him.

Miss W. Rather than have such a weight on my conscience, I would comply with the most extravagant of his desires, and suffer his cruelty to be the death of me.

Har. If those are your sentiments, it is my advice that you pay him a visit in his affliction.

Miss W. Oh no, Mr. Harmony, I would not for the universe. Mrs. Placid, do you think it would be proper?

Mrs. P. No, I think it would not—Consider, my dear, you are no longer a wife, but a single woman, and would you run into the clutches of a man?

Har. He has no clutches, madam; he is ill in bed, and totally helpless.—But, upon recollection, it

would, perhaps, be needless to go; for he may be too ill to admit you.

Miss W. If that is the case, all respect to my situation, my character, sinks before the strong desire of seeing him once more. Oh! were I married to another, I feel, that, in spite of all my private declarations, or public vows, I should fly from him, to pay my duty where it was first plighted.

Har. My coach is at the door; shall I take you to his house? Come, Mrs. Placid, wave all ceremonious motives, on the present melancholy occasion, and go along with Miss Wooburn and me.

Miss W. But, Mrs. Placid, perhaps poor Mr. Placid is in want of your attendance at home.

Har. No, they were both carried in the same carriage to Sir Robert's.

Miss W. [*As* HARMONY *leads her to the Door.*] Oh! how I long to see my dear husband, that I may console him!

Mrs. P. Oh! how I long to see my dear husband, that I may quarrel with him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Hall at SIR ROBERT RAMBLE'S.

The PORTER *discovered asleep.*

Enter a FOOTMAN.

Foot. Porter, porter, how can you sleep at this time of the day?—It is only eight o'clock.

Porter. What did you want, Mr. William?

Foot. To tell you, my master must not be disturbed, and so you must not let in a single creature.

Porter. Mr. William, this is no less than the third time I have received those orders within this half hour;—First from the butler, then from the valet, and now from the footman.—Do you all suppose I am stupid?

Foot. I was bid to tell you. I have only done what I was desired; and mind you do the same.

[*Exit.*

Porter. I'll do my duty, I warrant you. I'll do my duty. [*A loud Rapping at the Door.*] And there's a summons, to put my duty to the trial. [*Opens the Door.*

Enter HARMONY, Miss WOOBURN, *and* MRS. PLACID.

Har. These ladies come on a visit to Sir Robert. Desire one of the servants to conduct them to him instantly.

Porter. Indeed, sir, that is impossible—My master is not——

Har. We know he is at home, and therefore we can take no denial.

Porter. I own he is at home, sir; but, indeed, he is not in a situation——

Miss W. We know his situation.

Porter. Then, madam, you must suppose he is not to be disturbed. I have strict orders not to let in a single soul.

Har. This lady, you must be certain, is an exception.

Porter. No lady can be an exception in my master's present state: for I believe, sir, but—perhaps, I should not speak of it—I believe my master is nearly gone.

Miss W. Oh! support me, Heaven!

Mrs. P. But has he his senses?

Porter. Not very clearly, I believe.

Miss W. Oh, Mr. Harmony, let me see him, before they are quite lost.

Porter. It is as much as my place is worth, to let a creature farther than this hall; for my master is but in the next room.

Mrs. P. That is a dining room. Is not he in bed?

Har. [*Aside to the Ladies.*] In cases of wounds, the patient is oftentimes propped up in his chair.

Miss W. Does he talk at all?

Porter. Yes, madam, I heard him just now very loud.

Miss W. [*Listening.*] I think I hear him rave.

Har. No, that murmuring is the voice of other persons.

Mrs. P. The physicians in consultation, I apprehend.—Has he taken any thing?

Porter. A great deal, I believe, madam.

Mrs. P. No amputation, I hope;

Porter. What, madam?

Har. He does not understand you. [*To* Miss Wooburn.]—Come, will you go back?

Porter. Do, my lady, and call in the morning.

Miss W. By that time he may be totally insensible, and die without knowing how much I am attached to him.

Mrs. P. And my husband may die without knowing how angry I am with him!—Mr. Harmony, never mind this foolish man, but force your way into the next room.

Porter. Indeed, sir, you must not. Pray, Mr. Harmony, pray, ladies, go away.

Miss W. Yes, I must go from my husband's house, for ever, never to see that, or him again!

[*Faints on* Mr. Harmony.

Mrs. P. She is fainting—open the windows—give her air.

Porter. Pray go away :—There is plenty of air in the streets, ma'am.

Har. Scoundrel! Your impertinence is insupportable. Open these doors; I insist on their being opened.

[*He thrusts at a Door in the Centre of the Stage; it opens, and discovers* SIR ROBERT *and* MR. PLACID *at a Table, surrounded by a Company of Gentlemen.*

Sir R. A song—a song—another song——[MISS WOOBURN, *all astonishment, is supported by* MR. HARMONY *and* MRS. PLACID.—*The* PORTER *runs off.*] Ah, what do I see!—Women!—Ladies!—Celestial beings we were talking of.—Can this be real? [SIR ROBERT *and* MR. PLACID *come forward*— SIR ROBERT, *perceiving it is* MISS WOOBURN, *turns himself to the Company.*] Gentlemen, gentlemen, married men and single men, hear me thus publicly renounce every woman on earth but this; and swear henceforward to be devoted to none but my own wife.

[*Goes to her in Raptures.*

Plac. [*Looking at* MRS. PLACID, *then turning to the Company.*] Gentlemen, gentlemen, married men and single men, hear me thus publicly declare, I will henceforth be master; and from this time forward, will be obeyed by my wife.

[SIR ROBERT *waves his Hand, and the Door is closed on the Company of Gentlemen.*

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid—Mr. Placid, are you not afraid?

Plac. No, madam, I have consulted my friends, I have drank two bottles of wine, and I never intend to be afraid again.

Miss W. [*To* SIR ROBERT.] Can it be, that I see you without a wound?

Sir R. No, my life, that you do not; For I have a wound through my heart, which none but you can cure. But, in despair of your aid, I have flown to

wine, to give me a temporary relief by the loss of reflection.

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid, you will be sober in the morning.

Plac. Yes, my dear; and I will take care that you shall be dutiful in the morning.

Har. For shame! how can you treat Mrs. Placid thus; you would not, if you knew what kind things she has been saying of you: and how anxious she was, when I told her you were wounded in a duel.

Mrs. P. Was not I, Mr. Harmony?

[*Bursting into Tears.*

Plac. [*Aside to* HARMONY *and* SIR ROBERT.] I did not know she could cry;—I never saw it before, and it has made me sober in an instant.

Miss W. Mr. Placid, I rely on you to conduct me immediately from this house.

Sir R. That I protest against: and will use even violent measures to prevent him.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Lord Norland.

Enter LORD NORLAND.

Miss W. He will protect me.

Sir R. Who shall protect you in my house but I? My lord, she is under my protection; and if you offer to take her from me, I'll exert the authority of a husband, and lock her up.

Lord N. [*To* MISS WOODBURN.] Have you been deluded hither, and wish to leave the place with me? Tell me instantly, that I may know how to act.

Miss W. My lord, I am ready to go with you, but——

Har. But you find she is inclined to stay;—and

do have some compassion upon two people, that are so fond of you.

Enter MR. SOLUS, *dressed in a Suit of white Clothes.*

Sol. I am married!—I am married!—Wish me joy! I am married!

Sir R. I cannot give you joy, for envy.

Sol. Nay, I do not know whether you will envy me much when you see my spouse—I cannot say she was exactly my choice. However, she is my wife now; and that is a name so endearing, that I think I love her better since the ceremony has been performed.

Mrs. P. And pray when did it take place?

Sol. This moment. We are now returning from a friend's house, where we have been joined by a special licence; and I felt myself so happy, I could not pass Sir Robert's door without calling to tell him of my good fortune. And, as I see your lady here, Sir Robert, I guess you are just married too; and so I'll hand my wife out of the carriage, and introduce the two brides to each other. [*Exit* SOLUS.

Sir R. You see, my lord, what construction Mr. Solus has put on Miss Wooburn's visit to me; and, by Heaven, if you take her away, it will be said, that she came and offered herself to me, and that I rejected her!

Miss W. Such a report would kill me.

Enter SOLUS, *leading on* MISS SPINSTER.

Sol. Mistress Solus. [*Introducing her.*

Har. [*Starting.*] My relation! Dear madam, by what strange turn of fortune do I see you become a wife?

Mrs. S. Mr. Harmony, it is a weakness, I acknowledge: but you can never want an excuse for me, when you call to mind the scarcity of provisions.

Sol. Mr. Harmony, I have loved her ever since you told me, she spoke so well of me behind my back.

Enter SERVANT, *and whispers* MR. HARMONY, *who follows him off.*

Lord N. I agree with you, Mr. Solus, that this is a most excellent proof of a person's disposition; and in consideration, Sir Robert, that throughout all our many disagreements, you have still preserved a respect for my character in my absence, I do at last say to that lady, she has my consent to trust you again.

Sir R. And she *will* trust me: I see it in her smiles. Oh! unexpected ecstacy!

Enter MR. HARMONY.

Har. [*Holding a Letter in his Hand.*] Amidst the bright prospects of joy, which this company are contemplating, I come to announce an event that ought to cloud the splendour of the horizon—A worthy, but an ill-fated, man, whom you are all acquainted with, has just breathed his last.

Lord N. Do you mean the husband of my daughter?

Sol. Do you mean my nephew?

Plac. Is it my friend?

Sir R. And my old acquaintance?

Har. Did Mr. Irwin possess all those titles you have given him, gentlemen? Was he your son? [*To* LORD NORLAND] Your nephew? [*To* SOLUS.] Your friend? [*To* MR. PLACID.] And your old acquaintance? [*To* SIR ROBERT.] How strange, he did not know it!

Plac. He did know it.

Har. Still more strange, that he should die for want, and not apply to any of you?

Sol. What! Die for want in London! Starve in the midst of plenty!

Har. No; but he seized that plenty, where law, where honour, where every social and religious tie

forbade the trespass; and, in punishment of the guilt, has become his own executioner.

Lord N. Then my daughter is wretched, and her boy involved in his father's infamy.

Sol. The fear of his ghost haunting me, will disturb the joys of my married life.

Plac. Mrs. Placid, Mrs. Placid, my complying with your injunctions, in respect of Mr. Irwin, will make me miserable for ever.

Miss W. I wish he had applied to me.

Sir R. And, as I refused him his request, I would give half my estate, that he had not applied to me.

Har. And a man who always spoke so well of you all behind your backs!—I dare say that, in his dying moments, there was not one of you whom he did not praise for some virtue.

Sol. No, no—when he was dying, he would be more careful of what he said.

Lord N. Sir Robert, good day. Settle your marriage as you and your lady shall approve; you have my good wishes. But my spirits have received too great a shock, to be capable of any other impression at present.

Miss W. [*Holding him.*] Nay, stay, my lord.

Sol. And, Mrs. Solus, let me hand you into your carriage, to your company; but excuse my going home with you. My spirits have received too great a shock, to be capable of any other impression at present.

Har. [*Stopping* SOLUS.] Now, so loth am I to see any of you, only for a moment, in grief, while I have the power to relieve you, that I cannot help—Yes, my philanthropy will get the better of my justice.

[*Goes to the Door, and leads in* LADY ELEANOR, IRWIN, *and* EDWARD.

Lord N. [*Runs to* IRWIN, *and embraces him.*] My son! [IRWIN *falls on his Knees.*] I take a share in all

your offences--The worst of accomplices, while I impelled you to them.

Irw. [*On his Knees.*] I come to offer my returning reason; to offer my vows, that, while that reason continues, so long will I be penitent for the phrensy which put your life in danger.

Lady E. [*Moving timidly to her Father, leading* EDWARD *by the Hand.*] I come to offer you this child, this affectionate child; who, in the midst of our caresses, droops his head, and pines for your forgiveness.

Lord N. Ah! there is a corner of my heart left to receive him. [*Embraces him.*

Edw. Then, pray, my lord, suffer the corner to be large enough to hold my mother too.

Lord N. My heart is softened, and receives you all. [*Embraces* LADY ELEANOR, *who falls on her Knees; he then turns to* HARMONY.] Mr. Harmony, I thank you, I most sincerely thank you, for this, the most joyful moment of my life. I not only experience release from misery, but return to happiness.

Har. [*Goes hastily to* SOLUS, *and leads him to* IRWIN; *then turns to* MR. *and* MRS. PLACID.] And now, that I see all you reconciled, I can say—there are not two enemies, in the whole circle of my acquaintance, that I have not, within these three days, made friends.

Sir R. Very true, Harmony; for we should never have known half how well we all love one another, if you had not told us.

Har. And yet, my good friends, notwithstanding the merit you may attribute to me, I have one most tremendous fault; and it weighs so heavy on my conscience, I would confess what it is, but that you might hereafter call my veracity in question.

Sir R. My dear Harmony, without a fault, you would not be a proper companion for any of us.

Lord N. And whilst a man like you, may have (among so many virtues) some faults; let us hope there may be found in each of us (among all our faults) some virtues.

Har. Yes, my lord,—and, notwithstanding our numerous faults, it is my sincere wish, that the world may speak well of us all—behind our backs.

THE END.

LIBRARY
INDIA
BOMBAY
BR
OFF

WIVES AS THEY WERE & MAIDS AS THEY ARE



WIVES AS THEY WERE,

AND

MAIDS AS THEY ARE.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,
LONDON.

REMARKS.

The writer of this drama seems to have had a tolerable good notion of that which a play ought to be; but has here failed in the execution of a proper design.

Here are both fable and characters to constitute a good comedy; but incidents, the very essence of a dramatic work, are at times wanting, at other times ineffectual.

The first act promises a genuine comedy; and the authoress appears to have yielded up her own hopes with reluctance. In the dearth of true comic invention, she has had recourse at the end of her second act, to farce; though she certainly knew, that the natural, and the extravagant, always unite so ill, that in the combination, the one is sure to become insipid, or the other revolting.

Aware of this consequence, and wanting humour to proceed in the beaten track of burlesque, she then essays successively, the serious, the pathetic, and the refined comic; failing by turns in them all, though by turns producing chance effect; but without accomplishing evident intentions, or gratifying certain expectations indiscreetly raised.

The outline of a good play is a dangerous drawing to give to the public;—a feeble plan is the surest safeguard for an indifferent work: want of talent is never so forcibly perceived, as when certain parts are imperfect, whilst the rest demand eulogium. Critics are nice, and sometimes enraged where they find at once, ability, and imbecile attempt to explain vigorous conceptions.

Happy the author whose imagination extends no farther than the produce of his own anxious efforts! Such an one knows not his danger—his incapacity; and escaping censure, enjoys with triumph implied success, or receives animadversion with a sense of injury: whilst the more judicious, though more humble writer, often shrinks from praise as unmerited, yet bears with still heavier heart the critic's reproach as his due.

There are some just sentiments, some repartees, a little pathos, and an excellent moral in this production;—but there are also vapid scenes, and improbable events, which, perhaps, more than counterbalance those which are lively and natural.

Had the punishment of the two fashionable women been inflicted by a less disgraceful means, than a prison for debt; and had the singular conduct of Lord and Lady Priory been supported by occurrences, as pleasantly singular, this might have ranked among some very deserving comedies: Yet even in its present imperfect state, assisted by the art of excellent acting, it was most favourably received on the stage; and may now, without the charm of scenic art, afford an hour's amusement to the reader.

The character of Miss Dorillon is by far the most prominent and interesting one in the piece; and appears to have been formed of the same matter and spirit as compose the body and mind of the heroine of the "Simple Story"—A woman of fashion with a heart—A lively comprehension, and no reflection:—an understanding, but no thought.—Virtues abounding from disposition, education, feeling:—Vices obtruding from habit and example.

This part was written purposely for Miss Farren; but the very season she should have performed it, she quitted the stage, to appear in a more elevated character.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD PRIORY	*Mr. Quick.*
SIR WILLIAM DORRILLON	*Mr. Munden.*
SIR GEORGE EVELYN	*Mr. Pope.*
MR. BRONZELY	*Mr. Lewis.*
MR. NORBERRY	*Mr. Waddy.*
OLIVER	*Mr. Fawcett.*
NABSON	*Mr. Thompson.*
LADY PRIORY	*Miss Chapman.*
LADY MARY RAFFLE	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
MISS DORRILLON	*Miss Wallis.*

Several SERVANTS, *&c.*

Scene—London.

WIVES AS THEY WERE,

AND

MAIDS AS THEY ARE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. NORBERRY'S.

Enter SIR WILLIAM DORRILLON, *followed by* MR. NORBERRY.

Mr. Nor. Why blame me?—Why blame me?—My sister had the sole management of your daughter by your own authority, from the age of six years, till within eight months of the present time, when, in consequence of my sister's death, she was transferred to my protection.

Sir. W. Your sister, Mr. Norberry, was a prudent good woman—she never could instruct her in all this vice.

Mr. Nor. Depend upon it, my dear friend, that Miss Dorrillon, your daughter, came to my house just the same heedless woman of fashion you now see her.

Sir W. [*Impatiently.*] Very well—'Tis very well.—But, when I think on my disappointment———

Mr. Nor. There is nothing which may not be repaired. Maria, with you for a guide———

Sir W. Me! She turns me into ridicule—laughs at me! This morning, as she was enumerating some of her frivolous expenses, she observed me lift up my hands and sigh; on which she named fifty other extravagances she had no occasion to mention, merely to enjoy the pang, which every folly of her's sends to my heart.

Mr. Nor. But do not charge this conduct of your daughter to the want of filial love:—did she know you were Sir William Dorrillon, did she know you were her father, every word you uttered, every look you glanced, would be received with gentleness and submission:—but your present rebukes from Mr. Mandred (as you are called), from a perfect stranger, as she supposes, she considers as an impertinence, which she has a right to resent.

Sir W. I wish I had continued abroad. And yet, the hope of beholding her, and of bestowing upon her the riches I acquired, was my sole support through all the toils by which I gained them.

Mr. Nor. And, considering her present course of life, your riches could not come more opportunely.

Sir W. She shall never have a farthing of them. Do you think I have encountered the perils of almost every climate, to squander my hard-earned fortune upon the paltry vicious pleasures in which she delights? No; I have been now in your house exactly a month—I will stay but one day longer—and then, without telling her who I am, I will leave the kingdom and her for ever——Nor shall she know, that this insignificant merchant, whom she despises, was her father, till he is gone, never to be recalled.

Mr. Nor. You are offended with some justice; but, as I have often told you, your excessive delicacy, respecting the conduct of the other sex, degenerates into rigour.

Sir W. True; for what I see so near perfection as woman, I want to see perfect. We, Mr. Norberry,

can never be perfect; but surely women, women, might easily be made angels!

Mr. Nor. And if they were, we should soon be glad to make them into women again.

Sir W. [*Inattentive to* MR. NORBERRY.]—She sets the example. She gives the fashion!—and now your whole house, and all your visitors, in imitation of her, treat me with levity, or with contempt.—But I'll go away to-morrow.

Mr. Nor. Can you desert your child in the moment she most wants your protection? That exquisite beauty just now mature——

Sir W. There's my difficulty!—There's my struggle!—If she were not so like her mother, I could leave her without a pang—cast her off, and think no more of her.—But that shape! that face! those speaking looks! Yet, how reversed!—Where is the diffidence, the humility—where is the simplicity of my beloved wife? Buried in her grave.

Mr. Nor. And, in all this great town, you may never see even its apparition.

Sir W. I rejoice, however, at the stratagem by which I have gained a knowledge of her heart; deprived of the means of searching it in her early years, had I come at present as her father, she might have deceived me with counterfeit manners, till time disclosed the imposition.——Now, at least, I am not imposed upon.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lord Priory. [*Exit.*

Sir W. Lord Priory!

Mr. Nor. An old acquaintance of mine, though we seldom meet. He has some singularities; and yet, perhaps————

Enter LORD PRIORY.

Mr. Nor. My dear Lord, I am glad to see you. Mr. Mandred. [*Introducing* SIR WILLIAM.] My lord, I hope I see you in perfect health.

Lord P. Yes; but in very ill humour. I came to London early this morning with my family for the winter, and found my house, after going through only a slight repair, so damp, that I dare not sleep in it: and so I am now sending and going all over the town to seek for lodgings.

Mr. Nor. Then seek no further, but take up your lodgings here.

Lord P. To be plain with you, I called in hopes you would ask me; for I am so delicately scrupulous in respect to Lady Priory, that I could not bear the thought of taking her to an hotel.

Mr. Nor. Then pray return home, and bring her hither immediately, with all your luggage.

Lord P. I am most extremely obliged to you [*very fervently*]; for into no one house belonging to any of my acquaintance would I take my wife, so soon as into yours. I have now been married eleven years, and during all that time I have made it a rule never to go on a visit, so as to domesticate, in the house of a married man.

Sir W. May I inquire the reason of that?

Lord P. It is because I am married myself; and having always treated my wife according to the ancient mode of treating wives, I would rather she should never be an eye-witness to modern household management.

Sir W. The ancients, I believe, were very affectionate to their wives.

Lord P. And they had reason to be so; for their wives obeyed them. The ancients seldom gave them the liberty to do wrong: but modern wives do as they like.

Mr. Nor. And don't you suffer Lady Priory to do as she likes?

Lord P. Yes, when it is what I like too. But never, never else.

Sir W. Does not this draw upon you the character of an unkind husband?

Lord P. That I am proud of. Did you never observe, that seldom a breach of fidelity in a wife is exposed, where the unfortunate husband is not said to be "the best creature in the world! Poor man, so good natured!—Dotingly fond of his wife!—Indulged her in every thing!—How cruel in her to serve him so!" Now, if I am served so, it shall not be for my good nature.

Mr. Nor. But I hope you equally disapprove of every severity.

Lord P. [*Rapidly.*] What do you mean by severity?

Mr. Nor. You know you used to be rather violent in your temper.

Lord P. So I am still—apt to be hasty and passionate; but that is rather of advantage to me, as a husband—it causes me to be obeyed without hesitation—no liberty for contention, tears, or repining. I insure conjugal sunshine, by now and then introducing a storm; while some husbands never see any thing but a cloudy sky, and all for the want of a little domestic thunder to clear away the vapours.

Sir W. I have long conceived indulgence to be the bane of female happiness.

Lord P. And so it is.—I know several women of fashion, who will visit six places of different amusement on the same night, have company at home besides, and yet, for want of something more, they'll be out of spirits: my wife never goes to a public place, has scarce ever company at home, and yet is always in spirits.

Sir W. Never visits operas, or balls, or routs?

Lord P. How should she? She goes to bed every night exactly at ten.

Mr. Nor. In the name of wonder, how have you been able to bring her to that?

Lord P. By making her rise every morning at five.

Mr. Nor. And so she becomes tired before night.

Lord P. Tired to death. Or, if I see her eyes completely open at bed time, and she asks me to play one game more at piquet, the next morning I jog her elbow at half after four.

Mr. Nor. But suppose she does not reply to the signal.

Lord P. Then I turn the key of the door when I leave the chamber; and there I find her when I come home in the evening.

Sir W. And without her having seen a creature all day?

Lord P. That is in my favour: for not having seen a single soul, she is rejoiced even to see me.

Mr. Nor. And will she speak to you after such usage?

Lord P. If you only considered how much a woman longs to speak after being kept a whole day silent, you would not ask that question.

Mr. Nor. Well! this is the most surprising method!

Lord P. Not at all. In ancient days, when manners were simple and pure, did not wives wait at the table of their husbands? and did not angels witness the subordination? I have taught Lady Priory to practise the same humble docile obedience—to pay respect to her husband in every shape and every form—no careless inattention to me—no smiling politeness to others in preference to me—no putting me up in a corner—in all assemblies, she considers her husband as the first person.

Sir W. I am impatient to see her.

Lord P. But don't expect a fine lady with high

feathers, and the et cætera of an Eastern concubine; you will see a modest plain Englishwoman, with a cap on her head, a handkerchief on her neck, and a gown of our own manufacture.

Sir W. My friend Norberry, what a contrast must there be between Lady Priory and the ladies in this house!

Lord P. [*Starting.*] Have you ladies in this house?

Mr. Nor. Don't be alarmed; they are both single, and can give Lady Priory no ideas concerning the marriage state.

Lord P. Are you sure of that? Some single women are more informed than their friends believe.

Mr. Nor. For these ladies, notwithstanding a few, what you would call, excesses, I will answer.

Lord P. Well, then, I and my wife will be with you about nine in the evening; you know we go to bed at ten.

Mr. Nor. But remember you bring your own servants to wait on you at five in the morning.

Lord P. I shall bring but one—my old servant, Oliver, who knows all my customs so well, that I never go any where without him.

Mr. Nor. And is that old servant your valet still?

Lord P. No, he is now a kind of gentleman in waiting. I have had no employment for a valet since I married:—my wife, for want of dissipation, has not only time to attend upon herself, but upon me. Do you think I could suffer a clumsy man to tie on my neckcloth, or comb out my hair, when the soft, delicate and tender hands of my wife are at my command? [*Exit.*

Sir W. After this amiable description of a woman, how can I endure to see her, whom reason bids me detest; but whom nature still——

Mr. Nor. Here she comes; and her companion in folly along with her.

Sir W. There's another woman! that Lady Mary

Raffle! How can you suffer such people in your house?

Mr. Nor. She is only on a visit for a few months—she comes every winter, as her family and mine have long been intimately connected.

Sir W. Let us go—let us go. I cannot bear the sight of them. [*Going.*

Mr. Nor. Stay, and for once behave with politeness and good humour to your daughter—do—and I dare venture my life, she will neither insult nor treat you with disrespect. You know you always begin first.

Sir W. Have not I a right to begin first?

Mr. Nor. But that is a right of which she is ignorant.

Sir W. And deserves to be so, and ever shall be so. I stay and treat her with politeness and good humour! No—rather let her kneel and implore my pardon.

Mr. Nor. Suffer me to reveal who you are, and so she will.

Sir W. If you expose me only by one insinuation to her knowledge, our friendship is at that moment at an end.

Mr. Nor. [*Firmly.*] I have already given you my promise on that subject; and you may rely upon it.

Sir W. I thank you—I believe you—and I thank you. [*Exeunt* SIR WILLIAM *and* MR. NORBERRY.

Enter LADY MARY RAFFLE *and* MISS DORILLON.

Miss Dor. [*Stealing on as* MR. NORBERRY *and* SIR WILLIAM *leave the stage.*] They are gone. Thank Heaven they are gone out of this room, for I expect a dozen visiters! and Mr. Norberry looks so gloomy upon me, he puts me out of spirits: while that Mr. Mandred's peevishness is not to be borne.

Lady R. Be satisfied; for you were tolerably severe upon him this morning in your turn.

Miss Dor. Why, I am vexed; and I don't like to be found fault with in my best humour, much less when I have so many things to tease me.

Lady R. What are they?

Miss Dor. I have now lost all my money, and all my jewels, at play; it is almost two years since I have received a single remittance from my father; and Mr. Norberry refuses to advance me a shilling more. —What I shall do to discharge a debt, which must be paid either to-day or to-morrow, Heaven only knows!—Dear Lady Mary, you could not lend me a small sum, could you?

Lady R. Who, I! [*With surprise.*]—My dear creature, it was the very thing I was going to ask of you: for when you have money, I know no one so willing to disperse it among her friends.

Miss Dor. Am not I?—I protest I love to part with my money; for I know with what pleasure I receive it myself; and I like to see that joy sparkle in another's eye, which has so often brightened my own. But last night ruined me—I must have money somewhere.——As you cannot assist me, I must ask Mr. Norberry for his carriage, and immediately go in search of some friend that can lend me four, or five, or six, or seven hundred pounds. But the worst is, I have lost my credit—Is not that dreadful?

Lady R. Yes, yes; I know what it is.

[*Shaking her Head.*

Miss Dor. What will become of me?

Lady R. Why don't you marry, and throw all your misfortunes upon your husband?

Miss Dor. Why don't you marry? For you have as many to throw.

Lady R. But not so many lovers who would be willing to receive the load. I have no Sir George Evelyn with ten thousand pounds a year—no Mr. Bronzely.

Miss. Dor. If you have not now, you once had:

for I am sure Bronzely once paid his addresses to you.

Lady R. And you have the vanity to suppose you took him from me!

Miss Dor. Silence.—Reserve your anger to defend, and not to attack me. We should be allies by the common ties of poverty: and 'tis time to arm; for here's the enemy.

Enter SIR WILLIAM, *with* MR. NORBERRY.

Sir W. They are here still.

[*Aside to* MR. NORBERRY, *and offering to go back.*

Mr. Nor. [*Preventing him.*] No, no.

Miss Dor. I have been waiting here, Mr. Norberry, to ask a favour of you. [*He and* SIR WILLIAM *come forward.*] Will you be so kind as to lend me your carriage for a couple of hours?

Mr. Nor. Mr. Mandred [*Pointing to* SIR WILLIAM.] has just asked me for it to take him into the city.

Lady R. Oh, Mr. Mandred will give it up to Miss Dormilon, I am sure: he can defer his business till to-morrow.

Sir W. No, madam, she may as well put off her's I have money to receive, and I can't do it.

Miss Dor. I have money to pay, and I can't do i

Lady R. If one is going to receive, and the oth to pay money, I think the best way is for you to g together; and then, what deficiency there is on o side, the other may supply.

Miss Dor. Will you consent, Mr. Mandred?-Come, do, and I'll be friends with you.

Sir W. [*Aside.*] "She'll be friends with me!"

Miss Dor. Will you?

Sir W. No.

Miss Dor. Well, I certainly can ask a favour

Mr. Mandred better than I can of any person in the world.

Mr. Nor. Why so, Maria?

Miss Dor. Because, instead of pain, I can see it gives him pleasure to refuse me.

Sir W. I never confer a favour, of the most trivial kind, where I have no esteem.

Miss Dor. [*Proudly.*] Nor would I receive a favour, of the most trivial kind, from one—who has not liberality to esteem me.

Mr. Nor. Come, Miss Dorrillon, do not grow serious: laugh as much as you please, but say nothing that——

Sir W. [*To her, impatiently.*] From whom, then, can you ever receive favours, except from the vain, the idle, and the depraved?—from those whose lives are passed in begging them of others?

Miss Dor. They are the persons who know best how to bestow them: for my part, had I not sometimes felt what it was to want a friend, I might never have had humanity to be the friend of another.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir George Evelyn.

Mr. Nor. And pray, my dear, whose friend have you ever been?

Enter SIR GEORGE EVELYN.

Not Sir George Evelyn's, I am sure; and yet he, of all others, deserves your friendship most.

Miss Dor. But friendship will not content him: as soon as he thought he had gained that——

Sir G. He aspired to the supreme happiness of your love.

Miss Dor. Now you talk of "supreme happiness," have you procured tickets for the fête on Thursday?

Sir G. I have; provided you have obtained Mr. Norberry's leave to go.

Mr. Nor. That I cannot grant.

Miss Dor. Nay, my dear sir, do not force me to go without it.

Sir W. [*With Violence.*] Would you dare?

Miss Dor. [*Looking with Surprise.*] "Would I dare," Mr. Mandred!—and what have *you* to say if I do?

Sir W. [*Recollecting himself.*] I was only going to say, that if you did, and I were Mr. Norberry——

Miss Dor. And if you *were* Mr. Norberry, and treated me in the manner you now do,—depend upon it, I should not think your approbation or disapprobation, your pleasure or displeasure, of the slightest consequence.

Sir W. [*Greatly agitated.*] I dare say not—I dare say not. Good morning, Sir George—I dare say not. —Good morning, Mr. Norberry. [*Going.*

Mr. Nor. Stop a moment.—Maria, you have offended Mr. Mandred.

Miss Dor. He has offended me.

Sir W. [*At the Door, going off.*] I shan't offend you long.

Mr. Nor. [*Going to him, and taking him by the Arm.*] Stay, Mr. Mandred: Miss Dorrillon, make an apology: Mr. Mandred is my friend, and you must not treat him with this levity.

Lady R. No, no apology.

Miss Dor. No, no apology. But I'll tell you what I'll do. [*Goes up to* SIR WILLIAM.] If Mr. Mandred likes, I'll shake hands with him—and we'll be good friends for the future. But then, don't find fault with me—I can't bear it. *You* don't like to be found fault with yourself—You look as cross as any thing every time I say the least word against you. Come, shake hands; and don't let us see one another's failings for the future.

Sir W. There is no future for the trial.

Miss D. How do you mean?

Mr. Nor. Mr. Mandred sets off again for India to-morrow.

Miss D. Indeed! I thought he was come to live in England! I am sorry you are going.

Sir W. [*With earnestness.*] Why sorry?

Miss Dor. Because we have so frequently quarrelled. I am always unhappy when I am going to be separated from a person with whom I have disagreed; I often think I could part with less regret from a friend.

Sir G. Not, I suppose, if the quarrel is forgiven?

Miss Dor. Ah! but Mr. Mandred does not forgive! no! in his looks I can always see resentment. —Sometimes, indeed, I have traced a spark of kindness, and have gently tried to blow it to a little flame of friendship; when, with one hasty puff, I have put it out.

Sir W. You are right. It is—I believe—extinguished.

[*Exit* SIR WILLIAM—MR. NORBERRY *following.*

Sir G. A very singular man.

Lady R. Oh! if he was not rich, there would be no bearing him—Indeed, he seems to have lost all his friends; for, during the month he has been here, I never found he had any one acquaintance out of this house.

Miss Dor. And, what is very strange, he has taken an aversion to me.—But it is still more strange, that, although I know he has, yet in my heart I like *him.* He is morose to an insufferable degree; but then, when by chance he speaks kind, you cannot imagine how it soothes *me.*—He wants compassion and all the tender virtues; and yet, I frequently think, that if any serious misfortune were to befall me, he would be the first person to whom I should fly to complain.

Lady R. Then why don't you fly, and tell him of your misfortune last night?

Sir G. [*Starting.*] What misfortune?

Miss Dor. [*To* LADY RAFFLE.] Hush!

Lady R. A loss at play.—[*To* Miss Dorrillon.] —I beg your pardon, but it was out before you said hush!

Sir G. Ah, Maria! will you still risk your own and my happiness? For mine is so firmly fixed on you, it can only exist in yours.

Lady R. Then, when she is married to Mr. Bronzely, you will be happy, because she will be so?

Sir G. Bronzely! has he dared?

Miss Dor. Have not *you* dared, sir?

Lady R. But I believe Mr. Bronzely is the most daring of the two.—[*Aside to* Sir George.] Take care of him. [*Exit.*

Sir G. Miss Dorrillon, I will not affront you by supposing that you mean seriously to receive the addresses of Mr. Bronzely; but I warn you against giving others, who know you less than I do, occasion to think so.

Miss Dor. I never wish to deceive any one—I do admit of Mr. Bronzely's addresses.

Sir G. Why, he is the professed lover of your friend Lady Mary! or, granting he denies it, and that I even pass over the frivolity of the coxcomb, still he is unworthy of you.

Miss Dor. He says the same of you; and half a dozen more say exactly the same of each other. If you like, I'll discard every one of you as unworthy; but, if I retain you, I will retain the rest. Which do you chuse?

Sir G. I submit to any thing, rather than the total loss of you—But remember, that your felicity—

Miss Dor. "Felicity! felicity!"—ah! that is a word not to be found in the vocabulary of my sensations!— [*Sighing.*

Sir G. I believe you, and have always regarded you with a compassion that has augmented my love. In your infancy, deprived of the watchful eye and anxious tenderness of a mother; the manly caution

and authority of a father; misled by the brilliant vapour of fashion; surrounded by enemies in the garb of friends——Ah! do you weep? blessed, blessed be the sign!—Suffer me to dry those tears I have caused, and to give you a knowledge of true felicity.

Miss Dor. [*Recovering.*] I am very angry with myself.—Don't, I beg, tell Mr. Norberry or Mr. Mandred you saw me cry—they'll suppose I have been more indiscreet [*Stifling her Tears.*] than I really have. For in reality I have nothing——

Sir G. Do not endeavour to conceal from me, what my tender concern for you has given me the means to become acquainted with. I know you are plunged in difficulties by your father neither sending nor coming, as you once expected: I know you are still deeper plunged by your fondness for play.

Miss Dor. Very well, sir! proceed.

Sir G. Thus then—Suffer me to send my steward to you this morning; he shall regulate your accounts, and place them in a state that shall protect you from further embarrassment till your father sends to you; or shall protect you from his reproaches, should he arrive.

Miss Dor. Sir George, I have listened to your detail of the vices, which I acknowledge, with patience, with humility—but your suspicion of those which I have *not*, I treat with pride, with indignation.

Sir G. How! suspicion!

Miss Dor. What part of my conduct, sir, has made you dare to suppose I would extricate myself from the difficulties that surround me, by the influence I hold over the weakness of a lover?

[*Exeunt, separately.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

Another Apartment at MR. NORBERRY'S.

Enter Two PORTERS *from an upper Entrance, bringing in Trunks;* LORD PRIORY *and* MR. NORBERRY *following.*

Mr. Nor. Here, Stephens, why are you out of the way? Show the men with these boxes into the dressing-room appointed for my Lord Priory.

[*A* SERVANT *enters on the opposite Side, and the* PORTERS *follow him off at a lower Entrance on that Side.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM DORRILLON.

Sir W. My lord, I hope I see you well this evening.

Lord P. Yes, sir—and you find I have literally accepted Mr. Norberry's invitation, and am come to him with all my luggage.

Enter OLIVER, *with a small Box in each Hand.*

Lord P. Follow those men with the trunks, Oliver.

Mr. Nor. Ah, Mr. Oliver, how do you do?

Oliver. Pretty well—tolerably well—I thank you, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Priory.

Enter LADY PRIORY.

Lord P. [*To her.*] Mr. Norberry, our worthy host; and Mr. Mandred. [*She courtesies.*

Mr. Nor. I hope your ladyship will find my house so little inconvenient to you, as to induce you to make no very short visit.

Lady P. I have no doubt, sir, but I shall find, from your friendship, every comfort in this house, which it is possible for me to enjoy out of my own.

Enter LADY MARY RAFFLE *and* MISS DORRILLON.

Mr. Nor. [*Introducing them.*] Lady Priory—Lady Mary Raffle—Miss Dorrillon—Lord Priory.

Lady R. Permit me, Lady Priory, to take you to the next room: we are going to have tea immediately.

Lady P. I have drank tea, madam.

Miss Dor. Already! it is only nine o'clock.

Lady P. Then it is near my hour of going to bed.

[LORD PRIORY, SIR WILLIAM, *and* MR. NORBERRY, *retire to the Back of the Stage, and talk apart.*

Lady R. Go to bed already! in the name of wonder, what time did you rise this morning?

Lady P. Why, I do think it was almost six o'clock.

Lady R. [*In amaze.*] And were you up at six this morning?

Lady P. Yes.

Miss Dor. At six in the month of January!

Lady R. It is not light till eight: and what good, now, could you possibly be doing for two hours by candle-light?

Lady P. Pray, Lady Mary, at what time did you go to bed?

Lady R. About three this morning.

Lady P. And what good, could you, possibly be doing for eleven hours by candle-light?

Lady R. Good! it's as much as can be expected from a woman of fashion, that she does no harm.

Lady P. But I should fear you would do a great deal of harm to your health, your spirits, and the tranquillity of your mind.

[MR. NORBERRY *goes off*—LORD PRIORY *and* SIR WILLIAM *come forward.*

Lady R. Oh, my Lord Priory, I really find all the accounts I have heard of your education for a wife to be actually true!—and I can't help laughing to think, if you and I had chanced to have married together, what a different creature you most likely would have made of me, to what I am at present!

Lord P. Yes; and what a different creature you most likely would have made of *me*, to what I am at present.

Sir W. Lady Priory, I am not accustomed to pay compliments, or to speak my approbation, even when praise is a just tribute; but your virtues compel me to an eulogium.—That wise submission to a husband who loves you, that cheerful smile so expressive of content, and that plain dress, which indicates the elegance, as well as the simplicity, of your mind, are all symbols of a heart so unlike to those which the present fashion of the day misleads——

Miss Dor. Why look so steadfastly on me, Mr. Mandred? *Do you pretend to see my heart?*

Sir W. Have you any?

Miss Dor. Yes; and one large enough to hold—even my enemy.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. MR Bronzely.

Miss Dor. Show him into the other room. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Come, Lady Priory, we must introduce you to Mr. Bronzely: he is one of the most fashionable, agreeable, pleasant, whimsical, unthinking

and spirited creatures in all the world: you'll be charmed——

Lady P. I dare say it's near ten o'clock. I am afraid I shan't be able to keep awake.

Miss Dor. You must—We are going to have a little concert—'Twill be impossible to sleep.

[*Exit* Miss Dorrillon, *leading off* Lady Priory.

Lady R. Upon my word, my lord, your plan of management has made your wife unfit for company.

Lord P. So much more fit to be a wife.

Lady R. She is absolutely fatigued with hard labour—for shame!—How does household drudgery become her hand?

Lord P. Much better than cards and dice do yours.

[*Exit* Lady Mary, *followed by* Lord Priory —Sir William *is left on the Stage alone.*

Sir W. She "has a heart large enough to receive her enemy."—And by that enemy she means her father. [*He sits down, and shows Marks of Inquietude.*

Enter Sir George Evelyn.

Sir G. I beg your pardon, Mr. Mandred—I hope I don't interrupt you—I only wished to speak to Miss Dorrillon.

Sir W. She is just gone into the next room.

Sir G. To the concert?

Sir W. Are not you invited?

Sir G. Yes; but before I go in, I wish to know who are the company.——Can you tell whether—a Mr. Bronzely is there?

Sir W. I know he is.

Sir G. Are you acquainted with him?

Sir W. I have met him here frequently.

Sir G. And are you *certain* he is here at present?

Sir W. I have reason to be certain.

Sir G. Any particular reason?

Sir W. Your mistress, when his name was announced, went out, exclaiming, "he was the most charming and accomplished man in the world."

Sir G. [*Greatly agitated.*] She loves him, sir—I have reason to believe—to know she loves him. Thus she gives up my happiness and her own, to gratify the vanity of a man, who has no real regard for her; but whose predominant passion is to enjoy the villanous name of a general seducer.

Sir W. [*Rising.*] Why do you suffer it?

Sir G. Hush! Don't repeat what I have said, or I lose her for ever. I am at present suffering under her resentment; and have just sent into the next room, to ask, if she were there, to speak with her.

Enter MISS DORRILLON.

Miss Dor. And is it possible I was sent for by you?

Sir G. Don't be offended, that I should be uneasy, and come to atone——

Miss Dor. I can't forgive you, sir; 'tis impossible. [*Going.*

Sir G. You pardon those, Maria, who offend you more.

Sir W. But an ungrateful mind always prefers the unworthy.

Miss Dor. Ah! Mr. Mandred, are you there? [*Playfully.*] And have you undertaken to be Sir George's counsel? If you have, I believe he must lose his cause.—To fit you for the tender task of advocate in the suit of love, have you ever been admitted an honourable member of that court? Have you, with all that solemn wisdom of which you are master, studied Ovid, as our great lawyers study Blackstone? If you have—show cause——why plaintiff has right to defendant's heart.

Sir W. A man of fortune, of family, and of cha-

racter, ought at least to be treated with respect, and with honour.

Miss Dor. You mean to say, "That if A is beloved by B, why should not A be constrained to return B's love?" Counsellor for defendant—"Because, moreover, and besides B, who has a claim on defendant's heart, there are also C, D, E, F, and G; all of whom put in their separate claims—and what, in this case, can poor A do? She is willing to part and divide her love, share and share alike; but B will have all or none: so poor A, must remain, A, by herself, A."

Sir G. Do you think I would accept a share of your heart?

Miss Dor. Do you think I could afford to give it you all? "Besides," says defendant's counsellor, "I will prove that plaintiff B has no heart to give defendant in return—he has, indeed, a pulsation on the left side; but, as it never beat with any thing but suspicion and jealousy; in the laws of love, it is not termed, admitted, or considered—a heart." [*Going.*

Sir G. Where are you going?

Miss Dor. To the music-room, to be sure: and if you follow me, it shall be to see me treat every person there better than yourself—and Mr. Bronzely, whom you hate, to see me treat him best of all.

[*Exit.*

Sir G. I must follow you, though to death. [*Exit.*

Sir W. Fool! And yet am not I nearly as weak as he is? Else why do I linger in this house? Why feed my hopes with some propitious moment to waken her to repentance? Why still anxiously wish to ward off some dreaded fate?—If she would marry Sir George, now—if she would give me only *one* proof of discretion, I think I would endeavour to own her for my child.

Enter MR. BRONZELY, *in haste.*

Mr. Bron. My dear sir, will you do me the great-

est favour in the world?—you must do it in an instant too. Do, my dear sir, ask no questions; but lend me your coat for a single moment, and take mine—only for a moment—I cannot explain my reasons now, my impatience is so great;—but, the instant you have complied, I will inform you of the whole secret; and you will for ever rejoice that you granted my request. [*Pulling off his Coat.*

Sir W. [*Aside, with great Scorn.*] And this very contemptible fellow is the favoured lover of my daughter!—I'll—[*After a Struggle.*]—yes—I'll make myself master of his secret—it may possibly concern her—my child—my child's safety may depend upon it.

Mr. Bron. Dear Mr. Mandred, no time is to be lost!

Sir W. This is rather a strange request, Mr. Bronzely. However, your fervency convinces me you must have some very forcible reason.—There's my coat, sir. [*Gives it him.*

Mr. Bron. Thank you, dear sir, a thousand times.—This goodness I shall for ever remember—this binds me to you for ever! [*Putting it on.*] Thank you, sir, a thousand times! [*Bowing, dressed, and composed.*

Sir W. [*After putting on the other Coat.*] And now, sir, explain the cause of this metamorphosis?—let me have the satisfaction to know what advantage will accrue from it; and in what I have to rejoice?

Mr. Bron. Will you promise me not to reveal the secret, if I trust you with it?

Sir W. Would you add conditions after the bargain is made? I must know your secret instantly.

[*Threatening.*

Mr. Bron. Then I will disclose it to you voluntarily; and rely on your honour to keep it.

Sir W. [*Attentively.*] Well sir.

Mr. Bron. Hark! I thought I heard somebody coming! [*Listens to go.*

Sir W. I insist upon the information.

[*Laying hold of him.*

Mr. Bron. Well, then, sir—well—you shall—you shall.—Then, sir——in the small gallery, which separates the music-room from the rest of these apartments—in that little gallery, the lamp is just, unfortunately, gone out.—I was (as unfortunately) coming along, when the whisking of a woman's gown made me give a sudden start!—I found a person was in the gallery with me, and in the dark.

Sir W. Well, sir!

Mr. Bron. And so, confidently assuring myself, that it was Miss Dorrillon's waiting-maid, or Lady Mary's waiting-maid, I most unluckily clasped my arms around her, and took one kiss.

Sir W. Only one?

Mr. Bron. There might be half a dozen! I won't pretend to swear to one. We'll say half a dozen, before I knew who she was. My rapidity would not let her breathe at first, and she was fairly speechless.—But the moment she recovered her breath, she cried, "Villain! whoever you are, you shall repent this!"—and I found it was the voice of a lady to whom I had just been introduced in the concert room, one Lady Priory! It seems, she was stealing to bed at the time we unhappily met.

Sir W. But what has this to do with your coat?

Mr. Bron. A great deal, sir—you will find, a great deal.—As I perceived she did not know me, I carefully held my tongue—but she, with her prudish notions, called "Help!" and "murder!" On which, I flew to the door, to get away before the lights could be brought—she flew after me; and, as I went out, exclaimed—"Don't hope to conceal yourself; I shall know you among the whole concert room; for I carry scissars hanging at my side, and I have cut a piece off your coat."—[SIR WILLIAM *looks hastily at his Coat*

—*on which* BRONZELY *holds up the Part cut.*]—And, sure enough, so she had!

Sir W. [*In Anger.*] And what, sir, am I to have the shame——

Mr. Bron. Either you or I must.

Sir W. And do you dare——

Mr. Bron. Consider, my dear sir, how much less the fault is, if perpetrated by you than by me! This is the first offence of the kind which, I dare say, you have committed this many a year; and it will be overlooked in *you*. But I have been suspected of two or three things of the same sort within a very short time; and I should never be forgiven.

Sir W. Nor ought you to be forgiven—it would be scandalous in me to connive——

Mr. Bron. But would it not be more scandalous to reveal the secret of a person who confided in you! —who flew to you in distress, as his friend, the partner of his cares?

Sir W. Your impertinence to me, but more your offence to a woman of virtue, deserves punishment. Yet I think the punishment of death, in the way that a man of my Lord Priory's temper might inflict it, much too honourable for your deserts; so I save your life for some less creditable end. I lend you my coat, to disgrace you by existence: and will go to my chamber, and put on another myself.

[*Passes* BRONZELY, *in order to retire to his Chamber.*

Enter LORD PRIORY, *who meets him.* SIR WILLIAM *starts.*

Mr. Bron. [*Going up to* LORD PRIORY.] Ah, my lord! is the concert over? charming music! that solo was divine.

[SIR WILLIAM *steals to a Chair, and sits down to hide his Coat.*

Lord P. [*After looking inquisitively at* BRONZELY'S *Dress.*] It is time the concert should be over—it had been better had it never begun; for there have been some very improper persons admitted.

[*In great Anger.*

Mr. Bron. [*Affecting surprise.*] Indeed!

Lord P. [*Trembling with Rage.*] I am at a loss how to act. [*Draws a Chair with violence, and places himself down by* SIR WILLIAM—SIR WILLIAM *appears disconcerted and uneasy.*] But if I could find the man to whom this piece of cloth belongs——

Mr. Bron. What! that small piece of woollen cloth?

Lord P. Yes; then I should know how to act. In the mean time, Mr. Mandred, as I know you are a great admirer of my wife [SIR WILLIAM *starts.*] and a grave prudent man of honour, I come to ask your advice, how I am the most likely to find out the villain who has dared to insult her; for a gross insult she has received from one of Mr. Norberry's visitors, wearing a coat of which this is a part.

Mr. Bron. The villain, no doubt, stole out of the house immediately.

Lord P. I ordered the street door to be guarded that instant—and you, Mr. Bronzely, are now the last man whose habit I have examined.

Mr. Bron. And you see I am perfectly whole.

[*Turning round.*

Lord P. I do see——I do see.

[SIR WILLIAM *moves about on his Chair, and appears greatly embarrassed.* LORD PRIORY *starts up in a violent Passion*—SIR WILLIAM *starts up with him.*

Lord P. I'll find him out if he be on earth—I'll find him out if———My passion carries me away—I have not coolness to detect him myself—I'll employ another—I'll send Oliver in search. Oliver! [*Call-*

ing.] Oliver! here, Oliver! Why don't you answer when you are called, you stupid, dull, idle, forgetful, blundering, obstinate, careless, self-sufficient——

[*Exit, in a Fury.*

Sir W. [*Rising with great Dignity.*] And now, Mr. Bronzely, how do you think you are to repay me, for having felt one transitory moment of shame? Understand, sir, that shame is one of the misfortunes to which I have never——

Enter LADY MARY RAFFLE.

Mr. Bron. [*Aside to* SIR WILLIAM.] Sit down, sit down, sit down—hold your tongue, and sit down.

[SIR WILLIAM *reluctantly retires to a Chair.*

Lady R. Well, I do most cordially rejoice, when peevish, suspicious, and censorious people, meet with humiliation! I could die with laughing at the incident, which has put both my Lord and my Lady Priory into the greatest terror, grief, and rage.

Sir W. [*Rising.*] I am out of all patience. The malicious depravity of persons in a certain sphere of life is not to be borne. [*With Firmness and Solemnity.*] Lady Mary—Mr. Bronzeley——

Mr. Bron. [*In a half Whisper to him.*] Go away—don't expose yourself—steal out of the room—take my advice, and go to bed—hide yourself. So great is my respect for you, I would not have you detected for the world.

Sir W. I am going to retire, sir. I would not throw my friend's house into confusion and broils; therefore I am as well pleased not to be detected as you can be. [*Goes to the Door, then turns.*] But before I quit the room, I am irresistibly impelled to say—Mr. Bronzely! Lady Mary! while you continue to ridicule all that is virtuous, estimable, dignified, your vices most assuredly will plunge you into that very disgrace——

Enter OLIVER, *and places the Piece of Cloth against* SIR WILLIAM'S *Coat.*

Oliver. 'Tis as exact a match as ever was—it fits to a thread. Ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha!

Sir W. Rascal!

Mr. Bron. Did not I entreat you to go to bed?

Lady R. Oh, this is the highest gratification I ever knew! My lord! my lord! [*Calling.*

Mr. Bron. Hush, hush!—hold, for Heaven's sake.

Oliver. But mercy and goodness defend us! who would have thought of this grave gentleman? Ha! ha! ha!—I can tell you what, sir; my lord will be in a terrible passion with you. This house won't hold you both; and I am sure I hate to make mischief.—Mum—I'll say nothing about it. [*Clapping* SIR WILLIAM *on the Shoulder.*] And so make yourself easy.

Mr. Bron. [*On the other side of* SIR WILLIAM.] Yes, make yourself easy.

Oliver. A good servant should sometimes be a peacemaker—for my part, I have faults of my own, and so, I dare say, has that gentleman—and so, I dare say, has that gentlewoman. But of all the birds in the wood, how came you to make up to my lady? ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mr. Bron. No jests—no jests. Mr. Mandred is my friend—my very good friend—and he is not so much to blame as you think for.—Good night, my dear sir.—Heaven bless you.—I thank you a thousand times.—Good night.

[*Shaking Hands with* SIR WILLIAM, *and leading him towards the Door.*

Sir W. [*With steady Composure.*] Good night.—Good night, Lady Mary. [*Exit.*

Oliver. Why, he never so much as once said he was obliged to me.

Lady R. I am sure, if you do not discover this to your master, I will.

Oliver. Oh! as that old gentleman had not manners to say "Thank you for your kindness," I'll go tell my lord directly. [*Exit.*

Mr. Bron. [*Running after him.*] No, no, no—stop, Oliver. He is gone.

Lady R. What makes you thus anxious and concerned, Bronzely? Now, may I suffer death if, till I came into this room, I did not think you were the offender.

Mr. Bron. I! I indeed!—No, if I could have been tempted to offend any woman in this house in a similar manner, it could have been none but you.

[*Bowing.*

Lady R. No, Bronzely, no; I have been too partial to you, to have any remaining claims——Hark! don't I hear Lord Priory's voice in a dreadful rage!

Mr. Bron. Then Oliver has informed him. What shall I do to prevent mischief? Dear Lady Mary, as it is not proper for me to stay here any longer uninvited, do you run and try to pacify my Lord Priory. Tell him Mandred does not sleep here to-night; and in the morning you are sure he will make an apology.

Lady R. I will do as you desire—but I know Mr. Mandred so well, that I am sure he will not apologise. [*Exit.*

Mr. Bron. Then I will for him. Early in the morning, I'll wait on Lady Priory, and beg pardon in his name, without his knowing it. Yes, I have got poor Mandred into a difficulty, and it is my duty to get him out of it. And then, I shall not only serve him, but have one more interview with that heavenly woman. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. NORBERRY'S.

Enter MR. BRONZELY, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Mr. Bron. [*Looking at his Watch.*] I am early, I know: but Lady Priory is the only person I wish to see. Is my lord with her?

Serv. No, sir, Lord Priory sat up very late, and is yet in bed.

Mr. Bron. Acquaint Lady Priory, a person who comes on urgent business, begs to speak with her. If she asks my name, you know it. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Pray Heaven she may bless me with her sight! Never was so enchanted by a woman in my life!—and never played such a trick in my life. I am half inflamed by love, and half by spite, once more to attempt her.

Enter LADY PRIORY—*he bows most respectfully—she courtesies.*

Mr. Bron. Lady Priory, I come—I come upon rather an awkward, yet a very serious business: it was my misfortune to be among that company yesterday evening, where an unworthy member of it, had the insolence to offer an affront to your resplendent virtue.

Lady P. I have some household accounts to ar-

range, and breakfast to make for my lord as soon as he leaves his chamber: therefore, if you please, sir, proceed to the business on which you came, without thinking it necessary to interrupt it, by any compliment to me.

Mr. Bron. I will be concise, madam.—In a word, I wait upon you from Mr. Mandred, with the most humble apology for his late conduct, which he acknowledges to have been indecorous and unwarrantable: but he trusts, that, in consequence of the concession which I now make for him, the whole matter will, from this hour, be buried in oblivion.

Lady P. [*Going to the Side of the Scene, and speaking.*] If my lord be at leisure, tell him, here is a gentleman would be glad to speak with him——[*To* BRONZELY.] I am sorry, sir, you should know so little of the rules of our family, as to suppose, that I could give an answer upon any subject on which my husband condescends to be engaged. [*Goes*

Mr. Bron. Lady Priory, stop. You can at least use your power to soften Lord Priory's resentment, and unless this apology is accepted, a challenge must follow, and possibly he may fall.

Lady P. Possibly. [*Sighs*

Mr. Bron. You are interested for your husband's life?

Lady P. Certainly. But I set equal value on his reputation. [*Goes*

Mr. Bron. Hear me one sentence more.—I cannot part from her. [*Aside.*] Oh, I have something of such importance to communicate to you—and yet—I know not how!

Lady P. Then tell it to my husband.

Mr. Bron. Hem—hem. [*Aside.*] Oh, Lady Priory, if the insult of last night has given you offence, should you not wish to be inform'd of a plan laid for your greater violence? [*She turns*

Lady P. Good Heaven!

Mr. Bron. This is neither time nor place to disclose what I wish to say; nor do I know how to find an opportunity to speak with you alone, free from the possibility of intrusion; where I could reveal a secret to you, which is connected with your happiness—with your future peace.

Lady P. You alarm me beyond expression! I am going to my own house about twelve o'clock, for a couple of hours—follow me there.

Mr. Bron. And I shall be admitted?

Lady P. Certainly—for you have excited my curiosity, and I am all impatience to hear what you have to communicate that so much concerns me!

Mr. Bron. Promise, then, no person but yourself shall ever know of it. [*She hesitates.*] Unless you promise this, I dare not trust you.

Lady P. [*After a second Hesitation.*] I do promise—I promise faithfully.

Mr. Bron. Your word is sacred, I rely?

Lady P. Most sacred.

Mr. Bron. And you promise that no one but yourself shall know of the appointment we have now made at your house, nor of the secret which I will then disclose to you.

Lady P. I promise faithfully, that no one but myself shall ever know of either.

Mr. Bron. Remember then to be there alone, precisely at—

Lady P. At one o'clock.

Mr. Bron. And that your servants have orders to show me to you.

Lady P. I am too much interested to forget a single circumstance.

Mr. Bron. Go now, then, to Lord Priory with Mandred's apology—and urge his acceptance of it, with all that persuasion by which you are formed to govern, while you appear to obey.

Lady P. I will present the apology as I received it

from you; but do not imagine I dare give my opinion upon it, unless I am desired.

Mr. Bron. But if you are desired, you will then say——

Lady P. Exactly what I think. [*Exit.*

Mr. Bron. I'll do a meritorious act this very day. This poor woman lives in slavery with her husband. I'll give her an opportunity to run away from him. When we meet, I'll have a post chaise waiting a few doors from her house; boldly tell her that I love her; and——

Enter Miss Dorrillon.

My dear Miss Dorrillon, I could not sleep all night, and am come thus early on purpose to complain of your treatment of me during the whole of yesterday evening. Not one look did you glance towards me—and there I sat in miserable solitude up in one corner, the whole time of the concert.

Miss Dor. I protest I did not see you!—and, stranger still!—never thought of you.

Mr. Bron. You then like another better than you like me?

Miss Dor. I do.

Mr. Bron. Do you tell him so?

Miss Dor. No.

Mr. Bron. You tell him you like me the best.

Miss Dor. Yes.

Mr. Bron. Then I will believe what you say to him and not what you say to me.—And though you charge me with inconstancy, yet I swear to you, my beloved Maria, [*Taking her Hand.*] that no woman no woman but yourself——

Enter Sir William, *and starts at seeing his Daughter in such close Conversation with* Bronzely.

Sir W. [*Aside.*] How familiar!—my eyes could not be shocked with a sight half so wounding to my heart as this!

Mr. Bron. [*Apart to* Miss Dorrillon.] Hush! you have heard the story; but don't laugh at him now. He is in a devilish ill humour, and it will all fall on me. Go away.—It's a very good story, but laugh at him another time.

Miss Dor. I don't believe a word of the story; yet, as a received opinion, it is an excellent weapon for an enemy, and I long to use it.

Mr. Bron. Not now, not now—because I have some business with him, and 'twill put him out of temper.

[*He hands her to the Door.—Exit* Miss Dorrillon.

Sir W. [*Looking steadfastly after her.*] Poor girl! poor girl! I am not yet so enraged against her, but that I compassionate her for her choice!—Is this the man who is to be, for life, her companion, her protector!

Mr. Bron. Well, Mr. Mandred, I believe, I have settled it.

Sir W. Settled what? [*Anxiously.*

Mr. Bron. At least I have done all in my power to serve you: perhaps you don't know that Mr. Oliver divulged the whole affair. But I have waited on my Lady Priory, and I do believe I have settled it with her, to manage it so with my lord, that every thing shall be hushed up. You may expect a few jests among your female acquaintance, and a few epigrams in the news-papers; but I verily believe every thing material is safe.—Is there any further satisfaction which you demand from me?

Sir W. Not at present—a man is easily satisfied who possesses both courage and strength to do himself right, whenever he feels his wrongs oppressive. I have as yet found but little inconvenience from the liberties you have taken with me; and, what, just at this time, far more engages my attention than revenge, is an application to you for intelligence. Without further preface, do you pay your addresses to the young lady who lives in this house?

Mr. Bron. Yes I do, sir—I do.

Sir W. You know, I suppose, which of the two ladies I mean?

Mr. Bron. Which ever you mean, sir, tis all the same; for I pay my addresses to them both.

Sir W. [*Starting.*] To them both?

Mr. Bron. I always do.

Sir W. And pray, which of them do you love?

Mr. Bron. Both, sir—upon my word, both—I assure you, both.

Sir W. But you don't intend to marry both?

Mr. Bron. I don't intend to marry either: and, indeed, the woman whom I love best in the world, has a husband already. Do you suppose I could confine my affections to Lady Mary, or Miss Dorrillon, after Lady Priory appeared? do you suppose I did not know who it was I met last night in the dark? wherever I visit, Mr. Mandred, I always make love to every woman in the house: and I assure you, they expect it—I assure you, sir, they all expect it.

[SIR WILLIAM *walks about in anger.*

Have you any further commands for me?

Sir W. Yes, one word more.——And you really have no regard for this girl who parted from you as I came in?

Mr. Bron. Oh yes, pardon me—I admire, I adore, I love her to distraction: and if I had not been so long acquainted with Lady Mary, nor had seen my Lady Priory last night, I should certainly call Sir George Evelyn to an account, for being so perpetually with her.

Sir W. [*Anxiously.*] Do you think he loves her?

Mr. Bron. Yes, I dare say as well as I do.

Sir W. Do you think she likes him?

Mr. Bron. I think she likes me.

Sir W. But, according to your method of affection, she may like him too.

Mr. Bron. She may, she may.—In short, there's

no answering for what she likes—all whim and flightiness—acquainted with every body—coquetting with every body—and in debt with every body. Her mind distracted between the claims of lovers, and the claims of creditors,—the anger of Mr. Norberry, and the want of intelligence from her father.

Sir W. She is in a hopeful way!

Mr. Bron. Oh, it would be impossible to think of marrying her in her present state—for my part, I can't—and I question whether Sir George would.—But if her father come home, and give her the fortune that was once expected, why, then I may possibly marry her myself.

Sir W. [*Firmly.*] She will never have any fortune.—I came from India, lately, you know; and you may take my word, her father is not coming over, nor will he ever come.

Mr. Bron. Are you sure of that?

Sir W. Very sure.

Mr. Bron. Then keep it a secret—don't tell her so—poor thing! it would break her heart. She is dotingly fond of her father.

Sir W. Hah! how!—oh no, she can have no remembrance of him.

Mr. Bron. Not of his person, perhaps: but he has constantly corresponded with her—sent her presents, and affectionate letters—and you know a woman's heart is easily impressed.

Sir W. I never heard her mention her father.

Mr. Bron. Not to you; but to us who are kind to her, she talks of him continually. She cried bitterly the other day when the last ship came home, and there was no account of him.

Sir W. Did she? did she? [*Eagerly.*] Ay, I suppose she is alarmed lest he should be dead, and all his riches lost.

Mr. Bron. No, I believe her affection for him is

totally unconnected with any interested views. I have watched her upon that head, and I believe she loves her father sincerely.

Sir W. [*Wiping a Tear from his Eye.*] I believe it does not matter whom she loves.

Mr. Bron. By the by, she hates you.

Sir W. I thought so.

Mr. Bron. Yes, you may be satisfied of that. Yes, she even quarrelled with me the other day for speaking in your favour: you had put her in a passion, and she said, no one that loved *her*, ought to have any respect for you.

Sir W. I am much obliged to her—very much obliged to her. Did she say nothing more?

Mr. Bron. Only, that you were ill-natured, dogmatic, cruel, and insolent. Nothing more.——And say what she will against you, you know you can be even with her.

Sir W. Yes, I can be even with her, and I will be even with her.

Enter LORD PRIORY, *and takes* BRONZELY *on one Side.*

Lord P. I have accepted this man's apology:—I will not call him to a serious account; but he shall not escape every kind of resentment.—I am resolved to laugh at him; to turn the whole affair into mirth and good humour; at the same time to gall him to the heart. Good morning, Mr. Mandred: how do you do this morning, Mr. Mandred?—Let me go, [*Violently to* BRONZELY.] I must joke with him.

Mr. Bron. But neither your voice nor your looks agree with your words.

Lord P. Mr. Mandred, I did intend to be angry—but it would give too respectable an air to a base action—and so I am come to laugh at you.

Enter LADY RAFFLE.

And I am sure you, Lady Mary, will join even me, in laughing at this man of gallantry.

Lady R. Oh, I am absolutely afraid to come near the Tarquin.

Sir W. You need not, Lady Mary; for there can be no Tarquin without a Lucretia.

Lord P. However, Mr Mandred, it is proper I should tell you, I accept the apology you have made: but at the same time——

Sir W. [*Hastily.*] What do you mean my lord? I have made no apology.

Mr. Bron. Yes, yes, you have—I called and made one for you.

Sir W. Made an apology for me! You have just gone one step too far then; and I insist——

Mr. Bron. [*Drawing* SIR WILLIAM *on one Side.*] I will—I will—I will set every thing to rights. It would be base in me if I did not; and I will. [*Turns to* LORD PRIORY *and* LADY MARY.] Yes, Mr. Mandred, I will retrieve your character at the expense of my own. I am more able to contend with the phrenzy of a jealous husband than you are.

Enter MISS DORRILLON *and* SIR GEORGE EVELYN.

I am happy to see you—you are just come in time to hear me clear the grave, the respectable character of my friend Mr. Mandred, and to stigmatise my own.—My lord, vent all your anger and your satire upon me. It was I (pray believe me, I beg you will; don't doubt my word), it was I who committed the offence, of which my friend, the man I respect and reverence, stands accused—It was I who offended my Lady Priory, and then——

Lord P. It cannot be—I won't be imposed upon.

Lady R. But how generous and noble in him to take it upon himself!

Mr. Bron. [*To* SIR WILLIAM.] There! what can I do more? You see they won't believe me!—Tell me what I can do more? Can I do any thing more?—My feelings are wounded on your account, more than on my own, and compel me, though reluctantly, to quit the room. [*Exit.*

Sir G. I am at a loss which to admire most, the warmth of Mr. Bronzely's friendship, or the coldness of Mr. Mandred's gratitude.

Lady R. Oh! if it were not for that happy steadiness of feature, he could not preach rectitude of conduct as he does.

Lord P. [*Going up to* SIR WILLIAM.] Eloquent admonisher of youth!

Miss Dor. [*Going to him.*] Indeed, my rigid monitor, I cannot but express admiration, that, under those austere looks, and that sullen brow, there still should lurk——

Sir W. Have a care—don't proceed—stop where you are—dare not you complete a sentence that is meant to mock me.——I have borne the impertinence of this whole company with patience—with contempt: but dare you to breathe an accent suspicious of my conduct, and I will instantly teach you how to respect me, and to shrink with horror from yourself.

[*She stands motionless in Surprise.*

Lord P. What a passion he is in! Compose yourself, Mr. Mandred.

Miss Dor. I protest, Mr. Mandred——

Sir W. Silence! [*Raising his Voice.*] Dare not to address yourself to me.

Lady R. Did you ever hear the like?—And I vow she looks awed by him!

Lord P. How strange, that a man cannot command his temper!

Sir G. Mr. Mandred, permit me to say, I have ever wished to treat you with respect—nor would I be rash in laying that wish aside.—Yet, I must now

take upon me to assure you, that if you think to offend every lady in this house with impunity, you are mistaken.

Sir W. Sir George, if you mean to frighten me by your threats, I laugh at you—but if your warmth is really kindled, and by an attachment to that unworthy object, [*Pointing to* Miss DORRILLON.] I only pity you.

Sir G. Insufferable!—[*Going up to him.*]—Instantly make an atonement for what you have said, or expect the consequence!

Sir W. And pray, Sir George, what atonement does your justice demand?

Sir G. Retract your words—Acknowledge you were grossly deceived, when you said Miss Dorrillon was unworthy.

Sir W. Retract my words!

Sir G. Were they not unjust?—Is it a reproach, that, enveloped in the maze of fashionable life, she has yet preserved her virtue unsuspected? That, encumbered with the expenses consequent to her situation, she has proudly disdained, even from me, the honourable offer of pecuniary aid? That her fond hope still fixes on the return of an absent parent, whose blessing she impatiently expects? and that I, who have watched her whole conduct with an eye of scrutinizing jealousy, have yet only beheld that, which makes me aspire, as the summit of earthly happiness, to become her husband?

Sir W. Young man, I admire your warmth. [*With great Fervour and Affection.*] There is much compassion and benevolence, and charity, in sometimes mistaking the vicious for the virtuous;—and if in the heat of contention I have said a word reflecting on your character, I am ready to avow my error; and, before this company, to beg your pardon.

Sir G. That is not enough, sir,—[*Taking* Miss

DORRILLON *by the Hand, and leading her forward.*] — you must ask this lady's pardon.

[SIR WILLIAM *starts, and turns his Face away, strongly impressed.*

Sir W. Ask her pardon! Though I forgive some insults, I will not this.—Ask her pardon!—

Miss Dor. Nay, nay, Sir George, you have no business with Mr. Mandred's quarrels and mine.—Reserve your heroic courage for some nobler purpose than a poor woman's reputation.

Sir G. Point out a nobler, and I'll give up this.

Lady R. There is none so noble! And I wish, Sir George, you would undertake to vindicate mine.

Lord P. Come, Lady Mary, let us retire, and leave these two irritable men to themselves.

Lady R. Come, Maria, let us leave them alone. He'll teach Mr. Mandred to be civil for the future.

Miss Dor. [*In great Agitation.*] Dear Madam, I would not leave them alone for the world!

Lady R. Then, my lord, you and I will; they have no offensive weapons; so we may venture to leave them.

Lord P. This comes of being too warm in conversation! This comes of being in a passion!

[*Exeunt* LORD PRIORY *and* LADY MARY.

Sir G. While there is a female present, I have only to say——good morning, Mr. Mandred. [*Going.*

Miss Dor. [*Catching hold of him.*] For once I give up my pride to soften yours. Come, do not look thus determined!—I am sure Mr. Mandred did not mean to offend me; the words he made use of fell from his lips by accident.

Sir W. They did not—I meant them—I mean them still—and I repeat them.

Miss Dor. [*To* SIR WILLIAM.] Now, how can you be so provoking?—Nay, hold, Sir George, [*He offers to go.*] you shall not go away with that frowning

brow. [*She draws him gently towards* SIR WILLIAM; *then takes* SIR WILLIAM'S *Hand.*] Nor you, with that sullen aspect.—Come, shake hands, for my sake. ——Now, as I live, Sir George, Mr. Mandred's hand feels warmer and kinder than yours—he tries to draw it back, but he has not the heart. [SIR WILLIAM *snatches it away, as by compulsion.*] Thou art a strange personage!—thou wilt not suffer me either to praise, or to dispraise thee.—Come, Sir George, make up this difference—for if you were to fight, and Mr. Mandred was to fall——

Sir W. What then?

Miss Dor. Why, "I could better spare a better man."

Sir W. How!

Miss Dor. I see you are both gloomy, both obstinate, and I have but one resource.—Sir George, if you aspire to my hand, dare not to lift yours against Mr. Mandred. He and I profess to be enemies: but if I may judge of his feelings by my own, we have but passing enmities.—I bear him no malice, nor he me, I dare be sworn. Therefore, sir, lift but your arm against him, or insult him with another word, and our intercourse is for ever at an end. [*Exit.*

[SIR GEORGE *and* SIR WILLIAM *stand for some time silent.*

Sir G. Why is it in the power of one woman to make two men look ridiculously?

Sir W. I am at a loss to know, sir, whether you and I part friends or enemies.—However, call on me in the way you best like, and you will find me ready to meet you, either as an enemy, or as a friend.

[*Exeunt separately.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Hall at LORD PRIORY'S.

Two SERVANTS *discovered sitting—Another enters.*

1 *Serv.* Do you hear, Mr. Porter, you are to admit no person but Mr. Bronzely.

2 *Serv.* Mr. Bronzely—very well—[*A loud rapping.*]—and there I suppose he is.

1 *Serv.* [*Looking through the Window.*] Yes; that, I believe, is his carriage.—[*To Third Servant.*]—Let my lady know. [*Exit Third* SERVANT.

Enter MR. BRONZELY.

Mr. Bron. You are sure Lady Priory is at home?

1 *Serv.* Yes, sir, and gave orders to admit nobody but you.

Mr. Bron. Has she been some time at home?

1 *Serv.* Yes, sir; I dare say my lady came from Mr. Norberry's half an hour ago.

Mr. Bron. Waiting for me half an hour—[*Aside.*]—Show me to her instantly.

[*Exit, following the* SERVANT *hastily.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at LORD PRIORY'S.

Enter BRONZELY *and* LADY PRIORY, *on opposite Sides.*

Mr. Bron. My dear Lady Priory, how kind you are, not to have forgotten your promise.

Lady P. How was it possible I should? I have been so anxious for the intelligence you have to communicate, that it was pain to wait till the time arrived.

Mr. Bron. Thus invited, encouraged to speak, I will speak boldly—and I call Heaven to witness, that what I am going to say——

Lady P. No, stay a moment longer—don't tell me just yet—[*Listening towards the Side of the Scenes*]—for I wish him to hear the very beginning.

Mr. Bron. Who, hear the very beginning?

Enter LORD PRIORY.—BRONZELY *starts.*

Lord P. I have not kept you waiting, I hope. My lawyer stopped me on business, or I should have been here sooner.—My dear Mr. Bronzely—[*Going up to him.*]—I thank you a thousand times for the interest you take in my concerns; and I come prepared with proper coolness and composure, to hear the secret with which you are going to intrust us.

Mr. Bron. The secret!—yes, sir—the secret which I was going to disclose to my Lady Priory—Ha! ha! ha!—But my lord, I am afraid it is of too frivolous a nature for your attention.

Lord P. I account nothing frivolous which concerns my wife.

Mr. Bron. Certainly, my lord, certainly not.

Lord P. Besides, she told me it was of the utmost importance. Did not you? [*Angrily.*

Lady P. He said so.

Mr. Bron. And so it was—it was of importance then—just at the very time I was speaking to Lady Priory on the subject.

Lady P. You said so but this very moment.

Lord P. Come, come, tell it immediately, whatever it is. Come, let us hear it.—[*After waiting some time.*] Why, sir, you look as if you were ashamed of what you are going to say! What can be the meaning of this?

Mr. Bron. To be plain, my lord, my secret will disclose the folly of a person for whom I have a sincere regard.

Lord P. No matter—let every fool look like a fool, and every villain be known for what he is—Tell your story.

Lady P. How can you deprive me of the pleasure you promised? You said it would prevent every future care.

Lord P. Explain, sir.—I begin to feel myself not quite so composed as I expected. You never, perhaps, saw me in a passion—she has—and if you were once to see me really angry——

Mr. Bron. Then, my lord, I am apt to be passionate too—and I boldly tell you, that what I had to reveal, though perfectly proper, was meant for Lady Priory alone to hear. I entreated your ladyship not to mention to my lord that I had any thing to communicate, and you gave me a solemn promise you would not.

Lady P. Upon my honour, during our whole conversation upon that subject, you never named my Lord Priory's name.

Mr. Bron. I charged you to keep what I had to tell you, a profound secret.

Lady P. Yes; but I thought you understood I could have no secrets from my husband.

Mr. Bron. You promised no one should know it but yourself.

Lady P. He is myself.

Lord P. How, Mr. Bronzely, did you suppose she and I were two? Perhaps you did, and that we wanted a third. Well, I quite forgive you for your silly mistake, and laugh at you, ha! ha! ha! as I did at Mr. Mandred.—[*Seriously.*]—Did you suppose, sir, we lived like persons of fashion of the modern time? Did you imagine that a woman of her character could have a wish, a desire, even a thought, that was a secret from her husband?

Mr. Bron. It is amazing to find so much fidelity the reward of tyranny!

Lady P. Sir—I speak with humility—I would not wish to give offence.—[*Timidly.*]—But, to the best of my observation and understanding, your sex, in respect to us, are all tyrants. I was born to be the slave of some of you—I make the choice to obey my husband.

Lord P. Yes, Mr. Bronzely; and I believe it is more for her happiness to be my slave, than your friend—to live in fear of me, than in love with you. Lady Priory, leave the room. [*Exit* LADY PRIORY.] Do you see—did you observe the glow of truth and candour which testifies that woman's faith? and do you not blush at having attempted it?—Call me a tyrant! Where are the signs? Oh, if every married man would follow my system in the management of his wife, every impertinent lover would look just as foolish as you!

Mr. Bron. This is all boasting, my lord—you live in continual fear—for (without meaning any offence to Lady Priory's honour) you know you dare not trust her for one hour alone with any man under sixty.

Lord P. I dare trust her at any time with a coxcomb.

Mr. Bron. That is declaring I am not one—for I am certain you dare not leave her alone with me.

Lord P. [*In a Passion.*] Yes, with fifty such.

Mr. Bron. But not with one—and you are right—it might be dangerous.

Lord P. [*Angrily.*] No, it would not.

Mr. Bron. [*Significantly.*] Yes, it would.

Lord P. Have not you had a trial?

Mr. Bron. But you were present. You constantly follow all her steps, watch all she says and does. But I believe you are right—wives are not to be trusted.

Lord P. Mine is.

Mr. Bron. No, my dear Lord Priory, you must first become gentle, before you can positively confide in her affection—before you can trust her in a house, or in any place, alone.

Lord P. [*Hastily.*] To prove you are mistaken, I'll instantly go back to my friend Norberry's, and leave you here to tell her the secret you boasted. Pay your addresses to her, if that be the secret—you have my free consent.

Mr. Bron. My dear friend, I'll accept it.

Lord P. Ay, I see you have hopes of supplanting me, by calling me your friend.—But can you conceive now that she'll listen to you?

Mr. Bron. You have given me leave to try, and can't recall it.

Lord P. But depend upon it, you will meet with some terrible humiliation.

Mr. Bron. Either you or I shall.

Lord P. I shall laugh to hear you tumbled down stairs.

Mr. Bron. You are not to remain on the watch here; you are to return to Mr. Norberry's.

Lord P. Was that the bargain?

Mr. Bron. Don't you remember? You said so.

Lord P. Well, if that will give you any satisfaction——

Mr. Bron. It will give me great satisfaction.

Lord P. Heaven forgive me, but your confidence makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha!

Mr. Bron. And yours makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter OLIVER.

Lord P. Hah! What brings you here, Oliver? Lady Priory and I are only come home for a few hours.

Oliver. I know it, my lord. I thought nevertheless I might be wanted.

Mr Bron. And so you are, good Mr. Oliver. Your lord desires you to conduct me to your lady in the next room, and acquaint her it is with his permission I am come to conclude the conversation which was just now interrupted.—Is not that right, my lord? Are not those words exactly corresponding with your kind promise?

Lord P. I believe they are.

Oliver. —I am "to take Mr. Bronzely to my lady, and tell her you sent him." [*Exit* OLIVER.

Mr. Bron. Now this is perfect fashion: and while I step to Lady Priory, do you go and comfort my intended wife Lady Mary.

Lord P. I hate the fashion—and were I not sure you would now be received in a very unfashionable manner——

Mr. Bron. No rough dealings, I hope?

Lord P. Oh, you begin to be afraid, do you?

Mr. Bron. No—but I have met with an accident or two lately—and I am not so well acquainted with ancient usages as to know, in what manner a man of my pursuits would have been treated in former times.

Lord P. A man of your pursuits, Mr. Bronzely, is

of a very late date; and to be shamed out of them by a wife like mine.

Bron. Then we shall all three be old-fashioned.

[*Exit, following* OLIVER.

Lord P. [*Returning and looking anxiously after* BRONZELY.] I am passionate—I am precipitate—I have no command over my temper.—However, if a man cannot govern himself, yet he will never make any very despicable figure, as long as he knows how to govern his wife. [*Exit, on the Opposite Side.*

SCENE III.

SIR WILLIAM'S *Apartment at* MR. NORBERRY'S.

Several Trunks and travelling Boxes.—SIR WILLIAM *discovered, packing Writings into a Portfolio.*

Sir W. And here is the end of my voyage to England!—a voyage, which, for years, my mind had dwelt on with delight!—I pictured to myself a daughter grown to womanhood, beautiful! and so she is.—Accomplished! and so she is.—Virtuous! and so she is.—Am I of a discontented nature *then*, that I am not satisfied?—Am I too nice?—Perhaps I am.—Soothing thought!—I will for a moment cherish it, and dwell with some little gratitude upon her late anxiety for my safety.

[*He walks about in a thoughtful musing manner.—A loud thrusting and rapping is heard at his Chamber Door.*

Enter MISS DORRILLON *hastily and in affright.*

Miss Dor. Oh, Mr. Mandred, I beg your pardon

—I did not know this was your apartment: But suffer me to lock the door: [*She locks it.*] and conceal me for a moment, for Heaven's sake.

Sir W. What's the matter? Why have you locked my door?

Miss Dor. [*Trembling.*] I dare not tell you.

Sir W. I insist upon knowing.

Miss Dor. Why then—I am pursued by a——I cannot name the horrid name——

Nabson. [*Without.*] She went into this room.

Miss Dor. [*To* SIR WILLIAM.] Go to the door, and say I did not.

Sir W. How!

Nabson. [*Without.*] Please to open the door.

Miss Dor. Threaten to beat him if he won't go away.

Sir W. Give me the key, and let me see from whom you want to fly.—[*Commanding.*]—Give me the key.

Miss Dor. [*Collecting firmness.*] I will not.

Sir W. [*Starting.*] "Will not"——Will not, when I desire you!

Miss Dor. No—since you refuse me protection, I'll protect myself.

Sir W. But you had better not have made use of that expression to me—you had better not. Recall it by giving me the key.

Miss Dor. If I do, will you let me conceal myself behind that bookcase, and say I am not here?

Sir W. Utter a falsehood?

Miss Dor. I would for you.

[*A hammering at the Door.*

Sir W. They are breaking open the door.—Give me the key, I command you.

Miss Dor. "Command me!" "command me!" However there it is. [*Gives it him.*] And now, if you are a gentleman, give me up if you dar !

Sir W. "If I am a gentleman!" Hem, hem—"If I am a gentleman!" Dares me too!

[*Going slowly towards the Door.*

Miss Dor. Yes. I have now thrown myself upon your protection: and if you deliver me to my enemies——

Sir W. What enemies? What business have you with enemies?

Miss Dor. 'Tis they have business with me.

Sir W. [*To them without.*] I am coming. The door shall be opened.

Miss Dor. [*Follows and lays hold of him.*] Oh, for Heaven's sake, have pity on me—they are merciless creditors—I shall be dragged to a prison. Do not deliver me up—I am unfortunate—I am overwhelmed with misfortunes—have compassion on me!

[*She falls on her Knees.*

Sir W. [*In great agitation.*] Don't *kneel* to me!—I don't mean you to kneel to me!—What makes you think of kneeling to *me*?—I must do my duty.

[*He unlocks the Door.*

Enter NABSON—MISS DORRILLON *steals behind a Bookcase.*

Sir W. What did you want, sir?

Nabson. A lady, that I have just this minute made my prisoner: but she ran from me, and locked herself in here.

Sir W. [*With surprise.*] Arrested a lady!

Nabson. Yes, sir; and if you mean to deny her being here, I must make bold to search the room.

Sir W. Let me look at your credentials.—[*Takes the Writ.*]—"Elizabeth Dorrillon for six hundred pounds." Pray, sir, is it customary to have female names on pieces of paper of this denomination?

Nabson. Oh yes, sir, very customary. There are as many ladies who will run into tradesmen's books, as there are gentlemen; and when one goes to take

the ladies, they are a thousand times more slippery to catch than the men.

Sir W. Abominable!—Well, sir, your present prisoner shall not slip through your hands, if I can prevent it. I scorn to defend a worthless woman, as much as I should glory in preserving a good one: and I give myself joy in being the instrument of your executing justice.—[*He goes and leads* Miss Dorrillon *from the place where she was concealed—she casts down her Head.*]—What! do you droop? Do you tremble? You, who at the ball to-night would have danced lightly, though your poor creditor had been perishing with want! You, who never asked yourself if your extravagance might not send an industrious father of a family to prison, can you feel on the prospect of going thither yourself?

Miss Dor. For what cause am I the object of your perpetual persecution?

Nabson. Lor! Madam, the gentleman means to bail you after all: I can see it by his looks.

Sir W. How, rascal, dare you suppose, or imagine, or hint, such a thing? [*Going up to him in Anger.*

Miss Dor. That's right, beat him out of the house.

Sir W. No, madam, he shall not go out of the house without taking you along with him. Punishment may effect in your disposition what indulgence has no hope of producing.——There is your prisoner [*Handing her over to him.*] and you may take my word, that she will not be released by me, or by any one: and it will be only adding to a debt she can never pay, to take her to any house previous to a prison. [*With the Emotion of Resentment, yet deep Sorrow.*

Nabson. Is that true, my lady?

Miss Dor. [*After a Pause.*] Very true. I have but one friend—but one relation in the world—and he is far away. [*Weeps.*—Sir William *wipes his Eyes.*

Nabson. More's the pity.

Sir W. No, sr, no—no pity at all—for if fewer

fine ladies had friends, we should have fewer examples of profligacy.

[*She walks to the Door, then turns to* Sir WILLIAM.

Miss Dor. I forgive you.

[*Exit, followed by* NARSON.

Sir W. [*Looking after her.*] And perhaps I *could* forgive you. But I must not. No, this is justice—this is doing my duty—this is strength of mind—this is fortitude—fortitude—fortitude.

[*He walks proudly across the Room, then stops, takes out his Handkerchief, throws his Head into it, and is going off.*]

Enter LADY RAFFLE—*a Man following at a distance.*

Lady R. Mr. Mandred, Mr. Mandred! [*He turns.*] Sir—Mr. Mandred—Sir—[*In a supplicating Tone.*] I presume—I presume, sir——

Sir W. What, madam? what?

Lady R. I came, sir, to request a favour of you.

Sir W. So it should seem, by that novel deportment.

Lady R. If you would for once consider with lenity, the frailty incidental to a woman who lives in the gay world——

Sir W. Well, madam!

Lady R. How much she is led away by the temptation of fine clothes, fine coaches, and fine things.

Sir W. Come, to the business.

Lady R. You are rich, we all know, though you endeavour to disguise the truth.

Sir W. I can't stay to hear you, if you don't proceed.

Lady R. My request is—save from the dreadful horrors of a gaol, a woman who has no friend near her—a woman who may have inadvertently offended you, but who never——

Sir W. 'Tis in vain for you to plead on her account—she knows my sentiments upon her conduct

—she knows the opinion I have formed of her; and you cannot prevail on me to change it.

Lady R. Do you suppose I come to plead for Miss Dorrillon?

Sir W. Certainly.

Lady R. No, I am pleading for myself. I am unfortunately involved in similar circumstances—I have a similar debt to the self-same tradesman, and we are both at present in the self-same predicament.

Sir W. And upon what pretence did you suppose I would be indulgent to you, more than to her?

Lady R. Because you have always treated me with less severity; and because I overheard you just now say, you "should glory in delivering from difficulty a good woman."

Sir W. And so I should.

Lady R. How unlike the world!

Sir W. No—whatever the discontented may please to say, the world is affectionate, is generous, to the good; more especially to the good of the female sex; for it is only an exception to a general rule, when a good woman is in pecuniary distress.

[*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.

Enter LORD PRIORY, *humming a tune, but with a very serious face: he pulls out his Watch, with evident marks of anxiety—coughs—rubs his forehead—and gives various other marks of discontent and agitation.*—LADY RAFFLE *observes him with attention, then sidles up to him.*

Lady R. By the good humour you appear in, my lord, I venture to mention to you my distresses. I know the virtues of Lady Priory make my failings conspicuous; but then consider the different modes to which we have been habituated—she excluded from temptation——

Lord P. No—she shuns temptation. Has she not in this very house been compelled to make exertions?

Has she not detected and exposed both Mr. Mandred and Mr. Bronzely?

Lady R. Bronzely! Bronzely! How! [*Aside.*] Another rival?

Lord P. She has not done with *him* yet, I believe; for, to tell the truth, he is now with her at my house in Park Street. He taxed me with being jealous of my wife—to prove in what contempt I held the accusation, I left them together, and bid him make love to her.

Lady R. Is that possible?

Lord P. I can't say I would have done so rash an action, had I been married to some women—to you, for instance——but I have not a doubt of Lady Priory's safety: her mind, I know, is secure, and I have servants in the house to protect her from personal outrage. The only fear is, lest he should have received one; for 'tis now near two hours [*Looking at his Watch.*] since I came away, and I have neither seen nor heard any thing of either of them!—But to your Ladyship's concerns.

Lady R. I am at this instant, my lord, in the power of an implacable creditor; and unless some friend will give bond for a certain sum, I must—I blush to name it—be taken to a prison.

Lord P. I am not at all surprised at the circumstance, madam: but it amazes me that you should apply to me for deliverance. You have a brother in town; why not send to him?

Lady R. He was my friend the very last time a distress of this kind befell me. [*Weeps.*

Lord P. Ask Mr. Norberry.

Lady R. He was my friend the time before.

Lord P. Mr. Bronzely, then.

Lady R. And Bronzely the time before that.

Enter OLIVER.

Lord P. Ah, Oliver! I am glad to see you, my

good fellow. Ah! what have you done with Mr. Bronzely?

Oliver. Nay, my lord, that I can't tell. I can't tell what he has done with himself.

Lord P. How long has he been gone from my house?

Oliver. He is not gone yet, as I know of; for none of the servants let him out.

Lord P. Not gone! and you can't tell where he is!

Oliver. No, that we can't: we have looked in every room for him, and can't find him any where.

Lord P. Not find him! [*Recollecting himself.*] Ho! ho! I thought how it would be—I thought he'd have some trick played him. Where's your lady?

Oliver. That I can't tell neither. We have looked in every room, and can't find *her.*

Lord P. How!

Oliver. 'Tis as sure as I am alive. I and the butler, two footmen, and all the maids have been looking in parlours, chambers, and garrets, every crick and corner, and no where can we find either Mr. Bronzely or my lady: but, wherever they are, there's no doubt but they are together. Ha! ha!

Lady R. No doubt at all, Mr. Oliver.

Lord P. Together! together! and not in my house! You tell a falsehood. I'll go myself and find them.

Oliver. You must look sharp, then.

Lord P. How came you to miss them?

Oliver. I chanced to go into the next room, to see if there was a proper fire to get it well aired; I knew I had taken Mr. Bronzely to my lady in the inner room, and I had heard them both laughing not a quarter of an hour before; but now, all on a sudden, there was neither laughing nor talking, nor any noise at all—every thing was quiet.

Lord P. [*Anxiously.*] Well!

Oliver. And so I thought to myself, thought I, I'll sit down here; for my lady will be ringing soon: however, there was no ringing for a whole half hour; and so then I thought I would e'en rap at the door; but nobody called "Come in." So then I went in of my own accord; and there I found——

Lord P. What?

Oliver. Nobody! not a soul to be seen!

Lord P. [*Affecting indifference.*] Oh! she has been playing Bronzely some trick! She has been hiding him; and in some miserable place!

Oliver. But why need she hide herself along with him?

Enter Mr. NORBERRY.

Mr. Nor. My dear friend, my dear Lord Priory, let me speak with you alone.—I come upon business that——

Lord P. You look pale! What is your business? Tell it me at once.

Mr. Nor. It is of so delicate a nature——

Lord P. I know my wife is with Mr. Bronzely—I left them together. I know he is a depraved man; but I know she is an innocent woman.—Now, what have you to tell me?

Mr. Nor. What I have just learnt from one of your servants. About a quarter of an hour after you left them, they stole softly out at the back of your house, ran to a post-chaise and four that was in waiting, and drove off together full speed.

Lord P. Gone! eloped! run away from me! left me! left the tenderest, kindest, most indulgent husband, that ever woman had!

Lady L. That we can all witness.

Lord P. I was too fond of her—my affection ruined her—women are ungrateful—I did not exert a husband's authority—I was not strict enough—I hu-

moured and spoiled her!—Bless me! what a thick mist is come over my eyes!

Lady R. No, my lord, it is clearing away.

Lord P. Lead me to my room.

[*He is led off by* Mr. NORBERRY, *exhausted with grief and anger.*—OLIVER *looks after* LORD PRIORY, *then takes out his Handkerchief, and follows him off, crying.*

Lady R. Ha! ha! ha! Oh, how I enjoy this distress! Ha! ha! ha!

[*The* OFFICER *who has attended her during the Scene, and kept at the further part of the Stage, now comes forward, and bows to her. She starts on seeing him—takes out her Handkerchief, and goes crying off at the opposite Side, he following.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. BRONZELY'S.

Enter HOUSEKEEPER *and* FOOTMAN.

House. Dinner enough for twelve, and only two to sit down to it! Come home without one preparation—not a bed aired, or the furniture uncovered.

Foot. This is not the first time he has done so.

House. No: for 'tis always thus when a woman's ill the case. Well, I do say that my own sex are—

Foot. Hush! here they are. Run away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY PRIORY *and* Mr. BRONZELY.

Lady P. Only twelve miles from London?

Mr. Bron. No more, be assured.

Lady P. And you avow that I did not come hither by the commands of my husband, but was deceived into that belief by you.

Mr. Bron. Still it was by his commands your servant introduced me to you; and, upon an errand which I feared to deliver till I arrived at a house of my own.

Lady P. What is the errand?

Mr. Bron. To tell you that——I love you.

Lady P. Do you assert, Lord Priory sent you to me for this?

Mr. Bron. I assert, that, in triumph at your betraying to him our private appointment, he gave me leave to have a second trial. If, then, you have ever harboured one wish to revenge, and forsake a churlish ungrateful partner, never return to him more—but remain with me.

Lady P. And what shall I have gained by the exchange, when you become churlish, when you become ungrateful? My children's shame! the world's contempt! and yours! [*Smiling.*] Come, come; you are but jesting, Mr. Bronzely! You would not affront my little share of common sense, by making the serious offer of so bad a bargain. Come, own the jest, and take me home immediately.

Mr. Bron. Is it impossible for me to excite your tenderness?

Lady P. Utterly impossible.

Mr. Bron. I will then rouse your terror.

Lady P. Even that I defy.

Mr. Bron. Lady Priory, you are in a lonely house of mine, where I am sole master, and all the servants slaves to my will.

[LADY PRIORY *calmly takes out her Knitting, draws a Chair, and sits down to knit.*

Mr. Brom. [*Aside.*] This composure is worse than reproach—a woman who meant to yield would be outrageous. [*Goes to speak to her, then turns away.*] By Heaven she looks so respectable in that employment, I am afraid to insult her. [*After a struggle with himself.*] Ah! do not you fear me?

Lady P. No—for *your* fears will protect me—I have no occasion for mine.

Mr. Brom. What have I to fear?

Lady P. You fear to lounge no more at routs, at balls, at operas, and in Bond Street; no more to dance in circles, chat in side-boxes, or roar at taverns: for you have observed enough upon the events of life to know that an atrocious offence, like violence to a woman, never escapes condign punishment.

Mr. Brom. Oh! for once let your mind be feminine as your person—hear the vows——

[*He seizes her Hand—she rises—he starts back.*

Lady P. Ah! did not I tell you, you were afraid? 'Tis you who are afraid of me. [*He looks abashed.* Come, you are ashamed, too—I see you are, and I pardon you.—In requital, suffer me to return home immediately. [*He shakes his Head.*]——How! are not you ashamed to detain me here?

Mr. Brom. I was not this moment—But now you urge the subject, I think I am.

Lady P. Repent your folly, then, and take me home me. [*Hastily.*

Mr. Brom. Can you wish to go back to the man who has made this trial of your fidelity, and not resent his conduct?

Lady P. Most assuredly I wish to return. But if you deliver me safe, perfectly safe, from further insult, it will be impossible for me not to show resentment to Lord Priory.

Mr. Brom. Why only in that case?

Lady P. Because, only in that case, you will make

an impression on my heart—and I will resent his having exposed me to such a temptation.

Mr. Bron. Oh! I'll take you home directly—this moment—Any thing, any sacrifice to make an impression on our heart. William!—[*Calling.*]—I'll take you home directly. Here, John, Thomas, William—[*Calling.*] But, upon my life, it will be a hard task—I can not do it—I am afraid—I am afraid I cannot.—Besides, what are we to say when we go back?—No matter what, so you will but think kindly of me.

Enter SERVANT.

Order the horses to be put to the chaise; I am going back to London immediately. Quick! quick! Bid the man not be a moment, for fear I should change my mind.

Serv. The chaise is ready now, sir; for the post boy was going back without unharnessing his horses.

Mr. Bron. Then tell him he must perform his journey in half an hour—If he is a moment longer, my resolution will stop on the road. [*Exit* SERVANT.] I feel my good designs stealing away already—now they are flying rapidly. [*Taking* LADY PRIORY's *Hand.*] —Please to look another way—I shall certainly recant if I see you. [*Going.*]—And now, should I have the resolution to take you straight to your husband, you will have made a more contemptible figure of me by this last act, than by any one you have led me to.

[*Exit, leading her off.*

Mr. Bron. [*Without.*] Tell the post boy he need not wait—I have changed my mind—I shall not go to London to-night.

SCENE II.

A Room in a Prison.

Enter MISS DORRILLON *and* MR. NORBERRY.

Mr. Nor. You ought to have known it was vain to send for me. Have not I repeatedly declared, that, till I heard from your father, you should receive nothing more from me than a bare subsistence?—I promise to allow you thus much, even in this miserable place: but do not indulge a hope that I can release you from it. [*She weeps—he goes to the Door—then returns.*] I forgot to mention, that Mr. Mandred goes on board to-morrow, for India; and, little as you may think of his sensibility, he seems concerned at the thought of quitting England in resentment, without just bidding you a parting farewell. He came with me hither—shall I send him up?

Miss Dor. Oh, no! for Heaven's sake! Deliver me from his asperity, as you would save me from distraction.

Mr. Nor. Nay, 'tis for the last time—you had better see him. You may be sorry, perhaps, you did not, when he is gone.

Miss Dor. No, no: I sha'n't be sorry.—Go, and excuse me—Go, and prevent his coming. I cannot see him.—[*Exit* MR. NORBERRY.]—This would be aggravation of punishment, to shut me in a prison, and yet not shelter me from the insults of the world!

Enter SIR WILLIAM.—*She starts.*

Sir W. I know you have desired not to be troubled with my visit; and I come with all humility——I do not come, be assured, to reproach you.

Miss Dor. Unexpected mercy!

Sir W. No; though I have watched your course with anger, yet I do not behold its end with triumph.

Miss Dor. It is not to your honour, that you think necessary to give this statement of your mind.

Sir W. May be——but I never boasted of perfection, though I can boast of grief that I am so far beneath it. I can boast too, that, though I frequently give offence to others, I could never part with any one for ever (as I now shall with you), without endeavouring to make some atonement.

Miss Dor. You acknowledge, then, your cruelty to me?

Sir W. I acknowledge I have taken upon me to advise, beyond the liberty allowed, by custom, to one who has no apparent interest or authority.——But, not to repeat what is passed; I come with the approbation of your friend Mr. Norberry, to make a proposal to you for the future.

[*He draws Chairs, and they sit.*

Miss Dor. What proposal?—What is it?

[*Eagerly.*

Sir W. Mr. Norberry will not give either his money or his word to release you.—But as I am rich—have lost my only child—and wish to do some good with my fortune, I will instantly lay down the money of which you are in want, upon certain conditions.

Miss Dor. Do I hear right? Is it possible I can find a friend in you!—a friend to relieve me from the depth of misery! Oh, Mr. Mandred!

Sir W. Before you return thanks, hear the conditions on which I make my offer.

Miss Dor. Any conditions—What you please!

Sir W. You must promise, solemnly promise, never to return to your former follies and extravagancies. [*She looks down.*] Do you hesitate? Do you refuse?—Won't you promise?

Miss Dor. I would, willingly—but for one reason.

Sir W. And what is that?

Miss Dor. The fear, I should not keep my word.

Sir W. You will, if your fear be real.

Miss Dor. It is real—it is even so great, that I have no hope.

Sir W. You refuse my offer, then, and dismiss me? [*Rises.*

Miss Dor. [*Rising also.*] With much reluctance.—But I cannot,—indeed I cannot make a promise, unless I were to feel my heart wholly subdued; and my mind entirely convinced that I should never break it.—Sir, I am most sincerely obliged to you for the good which I am sure you designed me; but do not tempt me with the proposal again—do not place me in a situation, that might add to all my other afflictions, the remorse of having deceived you.

Sir W. [*After a Pause.*] Well, I will dispense with this condition—but there is another I must substitue in its stead.—Resolve to pass the remainder of your life, some few ensuing years at least, in the country. [*She starts.*] Do you start at that?

Miss Dor. I do not love the country. I am always miserable while I am from London. Besides, there are no follies or extravagancies in the country.—Dear sir, this is giving me up the first condition, and then forcing me to keep it by the second.

Sir W. There, madam, [*Taking out his Pocket-book.*] I scorn to hold out hopes, and then destroy them. There is a thousand pounds free of all constraint—[*She takes it.*]—extricate yourself from this situation, and be your own mistress to return to it when you please. [*Going.*

Miss Dor. Oh, my benefactor! bid me farewell at parting—do not leave me in anger.

Sir W. How! will you dictate terms to me, while you reject all mine?

Miss Dor. Then only suffer me to express my gratitude—

Sir W. I will not hear you. [*Going.*

Miss Dor. Hear me then on another subject: a subject of much importance—indeed it is.

Sir W. Well!

Miss Dor. You are going to India immediately—it is possible that there, or at some place where you will land on your way, you may meet with my father.

Sir W. Well!

Miss Dor. You have heard that I have expected him home for some time past, and that I still live in hopes——

Sir W. Well! [*Anxiously.*

Miss Dor. If you should see him, and should be in his company—don't mention me.

Sir W. Not mention you!

Miss Dor. At least, not my indiscretions——Oh! I should die, if I thought he would ever know of them.

Sir W. Do you think he would not discover them himself, should he ever see you?

Miss Dor. But he would not discover them all at once—I should be on my guard when he first came—My ill habits would steal on him progressively, and not be half so shocking, as if you were to accumulate them all in a breath.

Sir W. To put you out of apprehension at once—your father is not coming home—nor will he ever return to his own country.

Miss Dor. [*Starting.*] You seem to speak from certain knowledge—Oh, Heavens! is he not living?

Sir W. Yes, living—but under severe affliction—fortune has changed, and all his hopes are blasted.

Miss Dor. Fortune changed!—in poverty!—my father in poverty!—[*Weeping.*]—Oh, sir! excuse what may, perhaps, appear an ill compliment to your bounty; but to me, the greatest reverence I can pay to it.—You are going to that part of the world where he is; take this precious gift back, search out my fa-

ther, and let him be the object of your beneficence. —[*Forces the Bank Note into his Hand.*]—I shall be happy in this prison, indeed, I shall, so I can but give a momentary relief to my dear, dear father.—[SIR WILLIAM *takes out his Handkerchief.*]—You weep!—This present, possibly may be but poor allevintion of his sufferings—perhaps he is in sickness; or perhaps a prisoner! Oh! if he is, release me instantly, and take me with you to the place of his confinement.

Sir W. What! quit the joys of London?

Miss Dor. On such an errand, I would quit them all without a sigh—and here I make a solemn promise to you—— [*Kneeling.*

Sir W. Hold, you may wish to break it.

Miss Dor. Never—exact what vow you will on this occasion, I will make and keep it.

Enter MR. NORBERRY.—*She rises.*

——Oh, Mr. Norberry! he has been telling me such things of my father——

Mr. Nor. Has he? Then kneel again—call *him* by that name—and implore him not to disown you for his child.

Miss Dor. Good Heaven!—I dare not—I dare not do as you require. [*She faints on* NORBERRY.

Sir W. [*Going to her.*] My daughter!—my child!

Mr. Nor. At those names she revives.—[*She raises her Head, but expresses great Agitation.*]—Come, let us quit this wretched place—she will be better then. My carriage is at the door. You will follow us?

[*Exit, leading off* MISS DORRILLON.

Sir W. Follow you!—Yes—and I perceive that, in spite of philosophy, justice, or resolution, I would follow you all the world over. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in the Prison.

LADY RAFFLE *discovered sitting in a dejected Posture.*

Lady R. Provoking! not an answer to one of my pathetic letters!—not a creature to come and condole with me!—Oh that I could but regain my liberty before my disgrace is announced in the public prints! —I could then boldly contradict every paragraph that asserted it— by—*We have authority to say, no such event ever took place.*

Enter a Man belonging to the Prison.

Man. One Sir George Evelyn is here, madam; he will not name your name, because it sha'n't be made public; but he desires you will permit him to come and speak a few words to you, provided you are the young lady from Grosvenor Street, with whom he has the pleasure of being acquainted.

Lady R. Yes, yes, I am the young lady from Grosvenor-street—my compliments to Sir George, I am that lady—intimately acquainted with him; and intreat he will walk up. [*Exit the* MAN.] This is a most fortunate incident in my *tragedy*! Sir George no doubt takes me for Miss Dorrillon; yet I am sure he is too much the man of gallantry and good breeding to leave me in this place, although he visits me by mistake.

Enter SIR GEORGE EVELYN, *speaking as he enters*

Sir G. Madam, you are free—the doors of the prison are open—my word is passed for the——

[*He stops,—looks around—expresses Surprise & Confusion.*]

Lady R. [*Courtesying very low.*] Sir George, I am under the most infinite obligation!—Words are too poor to convey the sense I have of this act of friendship—but I trust my gratitude will for ever——

Sir G. [*Confused.*] Madam—really—I ought to apologize for the liberty I have taken.

Lady R. No liberty at all, Sir George—at least no apology is necessary—I insist on hearing no excuses. A virtuous action requires no preface, no prologue, no ceremony—and surely, if one action be more noble and generous than another, it must be that one, where an act of benevolence is conferred, and the object, an object of total indifference to the liberal benefactor. —Generous man, good evening.—Call me a coach. [*Going.*

Sir G. Stay, madam—I beg leave to say——

Lady R. Not a word—I won't hear a word—my thanks shall drown whatever you have to say.

Enter the former MAN.

Sir G. Pray, sir, did not you tell me, you had a very young lady under your care?

Man. Yes; sir, so I had—but she, it seems, has just been released, and is gone away with the gentleman who paid the debt.

Lady R. Do you mean Miss Dorrillon?

Man. I mean the other lady from Grosvenor Street.

Sir G. Who can have released her?

Lady R. Some friend of mine, I dare say, by mistake.—Well, if it be so, she is extremely welcome to the good fortune which was designed for me. For my part, I could not submit to an obligation from every one—scarcely from any one—and from no one with so little regret as I submit to it from Sir George Evelyn [*Exit, courtesying to* SIR GEORGE.

Sir G. Distraction! the first disappointment is nothing to this last! to the reflection, that Miss Dorrillon has been set at liberty by any man on earth except myself. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

An Apartment at MR. NORBERRY'S.

Enter LORD PRIORY.

Lord P. What a situation is mine! I cannot bear solitude, and am ashamed to see company! I cannot bear to think on the ungrateful woman, and yet I can think on nothing else! It was her conduct which I imagined had alone charmed me; but I perceive her power over my heart, although that conduct be changed!

Enter MR. NORBERRY, SIR WILLIAM *and* MISS DORRILLON.

Mr. Nor. My dear Lord Priory, exert your spirits to receive and congratulate a friend of mine. Sir William Dorrillon, [*Presenting him.*] father to this young woman, whose failings he has endeavoured to correct under the borrowed name of Mandred.

Sir W. And with that fictitious name, I hope to disburden myself of the imputation of having ever offered an affront to my Lord Priory.

[*He takes* LORD PRIORY *aside, and they talk together.*

Enter SIR GEORGE EVELYN.

Sir G. Is it possible what I have heard can be true? Is it Mr. Mandred who has restored Miss Dorrillon to the protection of Mr. Norberry?

Sir W. [*Coming forward.*] No, Sir George; I have now taken her under my own protection.

Sir G. By what title, sir?

Sir W. A very tender one—don't be alarmed—I am her father.

Sir G. Sir William Dorrillon? [*They talk apart.*

Enter LADY RAFFLE.

Lady R. Has there been any intelligence of my Lady Priory yet? [*Sees* Miss DORRILLON.] My dear Dorrillon, a lover of yours has done the civilest thing by me!—As I live, here he is. How do you do, Sir George? I suppose you have all heard the news of Bronzely running away with——

Miss Dor. Hush!—Lord Priory is here.

Lady R. Oh, he knows it—and it is not improper to remind him of it—it will teach him humility.

Lord P. I *am* humble, Lady Mary; and own I have had a better opinion of your sex than I ought to have had.

Lady R. You mean, of your management of us; of your instructions, restrictions, and corrections.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Priory and Mr. Bronzely.

Lady R. What of them?

Serv. They are here.

Lord P. I said she'd preserve her fidelity! Did not I always say so? Have I wavered once? Did I not always tell you, that she was only making scoff of Bronzely? Did I not tell you all so?

Enter BRONZELY *and* LADY PRIORY.

Mr. Bron. Then, indeed, my lord, you said truly; for I return the arrantest blockhead——

Lord P. I always said you would; but how is it? Where have you been? What occasion for a post-chaise? Instantly explain, or I shall forfeit that dignity of a husband, to which, in these degenerate times, I have almost an exclusive right.

Mr. Bron. To reinstate you, my lord, in those honours, I accompany Lady Priory; and beg public par-

don for the opinion I once publicly professed, of your want of influence over her affections.

Lord P. Do you hear? Do you hear? Lady Mary, do *you* hear?

Mr. Bron. Taking advantage of your permission to call on her, by stratagem I induced her to quit your house, lest restraint might there act as my enemy. But your authority, your prerogative, your honour, attached to her under my roof. She has held those rights sacred, and compelled even me to revere them.

Lord P. Do you all hear? I was sure it would turn out so!

Lady R. This is the first time I ever knew a woman's honour vindicated by the good word of her gallant.

Lord P. I will take her own word—the tongue which, for eleven years, has never in the slightest instance deceived me, I will believe upon all occasions. My dear wife, boldly pronounce, before this company, that you return to me with the same affection and respect, and the self-same contempt for this man—[*To* BRONZELY]—you ever had.

[*A short Pause.*]

Lady R. She makes no answer.

Lord P. Hush! hush! She is going to speak.—[*Another Pause.*]—Why, why don't you speak?

Lady P. Because I am at a loss what to say.

Lady R. Hear, hear, hear—do you all hear?

Lord P. Can you be at a loss to declare you hate Mr. Bronzely?

Lady P. I do *not* hate him.

Lady R. I was sure it would turn out so.

Lord P. Can you be at a loss to say you love me?

[*She appears embarrassed.*

Lady R. She *is* at a loss.

Lord P. How? Don't you fear me?

Lady P. Yes.

Lady R. She speaks plainly to that question.

Lord P. You know I love truth—speak plainly to all their curiosity requires.

Lady P. Since you command it then, my lord—I confess that Mr. Bronzely's conduct towards me has caused a sentiment in my heart——

Lord P. How? What?

Lady R. You must believe her—"she has told you truth for eleven years."

Lady P. A sensation which——

Lord P. Stop—any truth but this I could have borne.—Reflect on what you are saying—Consider what you are doing—Are these your primitive manners?

Lady P. I should have continued those manners, had I known none but primitive men. But to preserve ancient austerity, while, by my husband's consent, I am assailed by modern gallantry, would be the task of a stoic, and not of his female slave.

Lady R. Do you hear? Do you all hear? My lord, do you hear?

Lord P. I do—I do—and though the sound distracts me, I cannot doubt her word.

Lady P. It gives me excessive joy to hear you say so: because you will not then doubt me when I add—that gratitude, for his restoring me so soon to you, is the only sentiment he has inspired.

Lord P. Then my management of a wife is right after all!

Mr. Nor. Mr. Bronzely, as your present behaviour has in great measure atoned for your former actions, I will introduce to your acquaintance, my friend Sir William Dorrillon.

Mr. Bron. Mandred Sir William Dorrillon!

Sir W. And considering, sir, that upon one or two occasions I have been honoured with your confidence—you will not be surprised, if the first command I lay upon my daughter, is—to take refuge from your pursuits, in the protection of Sir George Evelyn.

Sir G. And may I hope, M[illegible] - -

Miss Dor. No—I will instantly put your hopes.

Sir G. How!

Sir W. By raising you to wishes. Alarmed at my sever readiness to become the subj ment.

Sir G. She shall never repin made.

Lord P. But, Sir George, man, you will fix your eyes state, and guard against a rebe

Lady P. Not all the rigour of it. duced me to wish them abolished.

Mr. Bron. [*To* LADY PRIORY.] have made me think with reverence o compact: and I demand of you, L consequence of former overtures, I legal authority over you, and becor gistrate—would you submit to th which Lady Priory submits?

Lady R. Any control, rather th magistrate at at all.

Sir G. [*To* MISS DORRILLON.] say to this?

Miss Dor. Simply one sentence.- present day, shall become a wife lik mer times.

THE END.

LIBRARY
OPTOE
BOMBAY

LOVERS VOWS



FREDERICK — HA! MOTHER! FATH — SCENE II

PAINTED BY HOWARD ENGRAVED BY [illegible] ENGRAVED BY [illegible]

LOVERS' VOWS;

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

PREFACE

ON THE

FIRST PUBLICATION OF LOVERS' VOWS.

It would appear like affectation to offer an apology for any scenes or passages omitted or added, in this play, different from the original: its reception has given me confidence to suppose what I have done is right; for Kotzebue's "Child of Love," in Germany, was never more attractive, than "Lovers' Vows" has been in England.

I could trouble my reader with many pages to disclose the motives, which induced me to alter, with the exception of a few common-place sentences only, the characters of Count Cassel, Amelia, and Verdun the Butler—I could explain why the part of the Count, as in the original, would have inevitably condemned the whole play—I could inform my reader why I have pourtrayed the Baron, in many particulars, different from the German author, and carefully prepared the audience for the grand effect of the last scene in the fourth act, by totally changing his conduct towards his son, as a robber—why I gave sentences of a humourous kind to the parts of the two

Cottagers—*why I was compelled, on many occasions,* to compress the substance of a speech of three or four pages, into one of three or four lines—and why, in no one instance, I would suffer my respect for Kotzebue, to interfere with my profound respect for the judgment of a British audience. But I flatter myself such a vindication is not requisite to the enlightened reader, who, I trust, on comparing this drama with the original, will, at once, see all my motives—and the dull admirer of mere verbal translation, it would be vain to endeavour to inspire with taste by instruction.

Wholly unacquainted with the German language, a literal translation of the "Child of Love" was given to me by the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, to be adapted, as my opinion should direct, for his stage. This translation, tedious and vapid, as most literal translations are, had the peculiar disadvantage of having been put into our language by a German—of course, it came to me in broken English. It was no slight misfortune, to have an example of bad grammar, false metaphors and similes, with all the usual errors of imperfect diction, placed before a female writer. But if, disdaining the construction of sentences,—the precise decorum of the cold grammarian,—she has caught the spirit of her author,—if, in every altered scene,—still adhering to the nice propriety of his meaning, and still keeping in view his great catastrophe,—she has agitated her audience with all the various passions he depicted, the rigid criticism of the closet will be but a slender abatement of the pleasure resulting from the sanction of an applauding theatre.

It has not been one of the least gratifications I have received from the success of this play, that the original German, from which it is taken, was printed in the year 1791; and yet, that, during all the period which has intervened, no person of talents or literary knowledge (though there are in this country many of that description, who profess to search for German dramas,) has thought it worth employment to make a translation of the work. I can only account for such an apparent neglect of Kotzebue's "Child of Love," by the consideration of its being in the original discordant with an English stage, and the difficulty of making it otherwise —a difficulty, which once appeared so formidable, that I thought I must have declined it, even after I had proceeded some length in the undertaking.

Independently of objections to the character of the Count, the dangerous insignificance of the butler, in the original, embarrassed me much. I found, if he was retained in the *Dramatis Personæ*, something more must be supplied than the author had assigned him: I suggested the verses I have introduced; but not being blessed with the butler's happy art of rhyming, I am indebted for them, except the seventh and eleventh stanzas in the first of his poetic stories, to the author of the prologue.

The part of Amelia has been a very particular object of my solicitude and alteration: the same situations which the author gave her, remain, but almost all the dialogue of the character I have changed: the forward and unequivocal manner, in which she announces her affection to her lover, in the original, would have been revolting to an English audience: the

passion of love, represented on the stage, is certain to be either insipid or hateful, unless it creates smiles or tears: Amelia's love, by Kotzebue, is indelicately blunt, and yet, void of mirth or sadness: I have endeavoured to attach the attention and sympathy of the audience, by whimsical insinuations, rather than coarse abruptness: she is still the same woman, I conceive, whom the author drew, with the self-same sentiments, but with manners conforming to the English, rather than the German taste; and if the favour in which this character is held by the audience, together with every sentence and incident, which I have presumed to introduce in the play, may be offered as the criterion of my skill, I am sufficiently rewarded for the task I have performed.

In stating the foregoing circumstances relating to this production, I hope not to be suspected of arrogating to my own exertions only, the popularity which has attended "The Child of Love," under the title of "Lovers' Vows:"—the exertions of every performer engaged in the play deservedly claim a share in its success; and I most sincerely thank them for the high importance of their aid.

REMARKS.

Plays, founded on German dramas, have long been a subject both of ridicule and of serious animadversion. Ridicule is a jocund slanderer; and who does not love to be merry? but the detraction, that is dull, is inexcusable calumny.

The grand moral of this play is—to set forth the miserable consequences which arise from the neglect, and to enforce the watchful care, of illegitimate offspring; and surely, as the pulpit has not had eloquence to eradicate the crime of seduction, the stage may be allowed an humble endeavour to prevent its most fatal effects.

But there are some pious declaimers against theatrical exhibitions, so zealous to do good,—they grudge the poor dramatist his share in the virtuous concern.

Not furnished with one plea throughout four acts of "Lovers Vows" for accusation, those critics arraign its catastrophe, and say,—"the wicked should be punished."—They forget there is a punishment called *conscience*, which, though it seldom troubles the defamer's peace, may weigh heavy on the fallen female and her libertine seducer.

But as a probationary prelude to the supposed happiness of the frail personages of this drama, the author has plunged the offender, Agatha, in bitterest poverty and woe; which she receives as a contrite penitent, atoning for her sins. The Baron Wildenhaim, living in power and splendour, is still more rigorously visited by remorse: and, in the reproaches uttered by his outcast

son, (become, by the father's criminal disregard of his necessities, a culprit subject to death by the law,) the Baron's guilt has sure exemplary chastisement. But yet, after all the varied anguish of his mind, should tranquillity promise, at length, to crown his future days, where is the immorality? If holy books teach, that the wicked too often prosper, why are plays to be withheld from inculcating the self-same doctrine? Not that a worldly man would class it amongst the prosperous events of life, to be (like the Baron) compelled to marry his cast-off mistress, after twenty years absence.

It may not here be wholly useless to observe—that, in the scene in the fourth act, just mentioned, between the Baron and his son—the actor, who plays Frederick, too frequently forms his notion of the passion he is to pourtray, through the interview, from the following lines, at the end of one of his speeches:

"And, when he dies, a funeral sermon will praise his great benevolence, his christian charities."

The sarcasm here to be expressed, should be evinced in no one sentence else. Where, in a preceding speech, he says, the Baron is—"a man, kind, generous, beloved by his tenants:"—he certainly means *this* to be his character. Frederick is not ironical, except by accident. Irony and sarcasm do not appertain to youth: open, plain, downright habits, are the endearing qualities of the young. Moreover, a son, urged by cruel injuries, may upbraid his father even to rage, and the audience will yet feel interest for them both; but if he contemn or deride him, all respect is lost, both for the one and the other.

The passions which take possession of this young soldier's heart, when admitted to the presence of the Baron, knowing him to be his father, are various; but scorn is not amongst the number. Awe gives the first sensation, and is subdued by pride: filial tenderness would next force its way, and is overwhelmed by anger. These passions strive in his breast, till grief for his mother's wrongs, and his own ignominious state, burst all restraint—and as fury drives him to the point of distraction, he changes his accents to a tone of irony, in the lines just quoted.

"Oh! there be actors I have seen, and heard others praise, who, (not to speak it profanely,) have"—scornfully sneered at their father through this whole scene, and yet, been highly applauded.

While it is the fashion to see German plays, both the German and the English author will patiently bear the displeasure of a small party of critics, as the absolute conditions on which they enjoy popularity. Nor, till the historian is forbid to tell, how tyrants have success in vanquishing nations; or the artist be compelled to paint the beauteous courtezan with hideous features, as the emblem of her mind, shall the free dramatist be untrue to his science; which, like theirs, is to follow nature through all her rightful course. Deception, beyond the result of genuine imitative art, he will disclaim, and say with Shakspeare to the self-approving zealot:

"Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometime's by action dignified."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

BARON WILDENHAIM	*Mr. Murray.*
COUNT CASSELL	*Mr. Knight.*
ANHALT	*Mr. H. Johnston.*
FREDERICK	*Mr. Pope.*
VERDUN, the Butler	*Mr. Munden.*
LANDLORD	*Mr. Thompson.*
COTTAGER	*Mr. Davenport.*
FARMER	*Mr. Rees.*
COUNTRYMAN	*Mr. Dyke.*
AGATHA FRIBURG	*Mrs. Johnson.*
AMELIA WILDENHAIM	*Mrs. H. Johnston.*
COTTAGER'S WIFE	*Mrs. Davenport.*
COUNTRY GIRL	*Miss Leserve.*

Huntsmen, Servants, &c.

SCENE—Germany.

LOVERS' VOWS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A high road, a town at a distance.—A small inn on one side the road.—A cottage on the other.

The LANDLORD *of the inn leads* AGATHA *by the hand out of his house.*

Land. No, no! no room for you any longer—It is the fair to-day in the next village; as great a fair as any in the German dominions. The country people with their wives and children take up every corner we have.

Agatha. You will turn a poor sick woman out of doors, who has spent her last farthing in your house?

Land. For that very reason; because she *has* spent her last farthing.

Agatha. I can work.

Land. You can hardly move your hands.

Agatha. My strength will come again.

Land. Then *you* may come again.

Agatha. What am I to do? where shall I go?

Land. It is fine weather—you may go any where.

Agatha. Who will give me a morsel of bread to satisfy my hunger?

Land. Sick people eat but little.

Agatha. Hard, unfeeling man, have pity.

Land. When times are hard, pity is too expensive

for a poor man. Ask alms of the different people that go by.

Agatha. Beg! I would rather starve.

Land. You may beg, and starve too. What a fine lady you are! Many an honest woman has been obliged to beg. Why should not you? [AGATHA *sits down upon a large stone under a tree.*] For instance, here comes somebody; and I will teach you how to begin. [*A* COUNTRYMAN, *with working tools, crosses the road.*] Good day, neighbour Nicholas.

Countr. Good day. [*Stops.*

Land. Won't you give a trifle to this poor woman? [COUNTRYMAN *takes no notice, but walks off.*] That would not do—the poor man has nothing himself but what he gets by hard labour. Here comes a rich farmer; perhaps he will give you something.

Enter FARMER.

Land. Good morning to you, sir. Under yon tree sits a poor woman in distress, who is in need of your charity.

Far. Is she not ashamed of herself? Why don't she work?

Land. She has had a fever. If you would but pay for one dinner—

Far. The harvest has been but indifferent, and my cattle and sheep have suffered by a distemper. [*Exit.*

Land. My fat smiling face was not made for begging: you'll have more luck with your thin, sour one—so, I'll leave you to yourself. [*Exit.*

[AGATHA *rises, and comes forward.*

Agatha. Oh Providence! thou hast till this hour protected me, and hast given me fortitude not to despair. Receive my humble thanks, and restore me to health, for the sake of my poor son, the innocent cause of my sufferings, and yet my only comfort. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, grant, that I may see him once more! See him improved in strength of mind and body; and

that by thy gracious mercy he may never be visited with afflictions great as mine. [*After a pause.*] Protect his father too, merciful Providence, and pardon his crime of perjury to me! Here, in the face of Heaven (supposing my end approaching, and that I can but a few days longer struggle with want and sorrow,) here, I solemnly forgive my seducer for all the ills, the accumulated evils, which his allurements, his deceit and cruelty, have for twenty years past drawn upon me.

Enter a COUNTRY GIRL, *with a basket.*

Agatha [*Near fainting.*] My dear child, if you could spare me a trifle—

Girl. I have not a farthing in the world—But I am going to market to sell my eggs, and as I come back I'll give you three-pence—And I'll be back as soon as ever I can. [*Exit.*

Agatha. There was a time, when I was as happy as this country girl, and as willing to assist the poor in distress. [*Retires to the tree, and sits down.*

Enter FREDERICK—*He is dressed in a German soldier's uniform, has a knapsack on his shoulders, appears in high spirits, and stops at the door of the inn.*

Fred. Halt! Stand at ease! It is a very hot day—A draught of good wine will not be amiss. But first let me consult my purse. [*Takes out a couple of pieces of money, which he turns about in his hand.*] This will do for a breakfast—the other remains for my dinner; and in the evening I shall be at home. [*Calls out.*] Ha! Halloo! Landlord! [*Takes notice of* AGATHA, *who is leaning against the tree.*] Who is that? A poor sick woman! She don't beg; but her appearance makes me think she is in want. Must one always wait to give till one is asked? Shall I go without my breakfast now, or lose my dinner? The first I think is best. Ay, I don't want a breakfast, for dinner-

time will soon be here. To do good satisfies both hunger and thirst. [*Going towards her with the money in his hand.*] Take this, good woman.

[*She stretches her hand for the gift, looks stedfastly at him, and cries out with astonishment and joy.*

Agatha. Frederick!

Fred. Mother! [*With amazement and grief.*] Mother! For God's sake what is this! How is this! And why do I find my mother thus? Speak!

Agatha. I cannot speak, dear son! [*Rising, and embracing him.*] My dear Frederick! The joy is too great—I was not prepared—

Fred. Dear mother, compose yourself: [*Leans her head against his breast.*] now then, be comforted. How she trembles! She is fainting.

Agatha. I am so weak, and my head so giddy—I had nothing to eat all yesterday.

Fred. Good heavens! Here is my little money, take it all! Oh mother! mother! [*Runs to the inn.*] Landlord! Landlord! [*Knocking violently at the door.*]

Land. What is the matter?

Fred. A bottle of wine—quick, quick!

Land. [*Surprised.*] A bottle of wine! For who?

Fred. For me. Why do you ask? Why don't you make haste?

Land. Well, well, Mr. Soldier: but can you pay for it?

Fred. Here is money—make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

Land. Patience! Patience! [*Goes off.*

Fred. [*To* AGATHA.] You were hungry yesterday, when I sat down to a comfortable dinner. You were hungry, when I partook of a good supper. Oh! Why is so much bitter mixed with the joy of my return?

Agatha. Be patient, my dear Frederick. Since I see

you, I am well. But I *have been* very ill: so ill, that I despaired of ever beholding you again.

Fred. Ill, and I was not with you? I will, now, never leave you more. Look, mother, how tall and strong I am grown. These arms can now afford you support. They can, and shall, procure you subsistence.

LANDLORD, *coming out of the house with a small pitcher.*

Land. Here is wine—a most delicious nectar. [*Aside.*] It is only Rhenish; but it will pass for the best old Hock.

Fred. [*Impatiently snatching the pitcher.*] Give it me.

Land. No, no—the money first. One shilling and two-pence, if you please. [FRED. *gives him money.*

Fred. This is all I have.—Here, here, mother.

[*While she drinks,* LANDLORD *counts the money.*

Land. Three halfpence too short! However, one must be charitable. [*Exit* LANDLORD.

Agatha. I thank you, my dear Frederick—Wine revives me—Wine from the hand of my son gives me almost a new life.

Fred. Don't speak too much, mother—Take your time.

Agatha. Tell me, dear child, how you have passed the five years, since you left me.

Fred. Both good and bad, mother. To-day plenty—to-morrow not so much—And sometimes nothing at all.

Agatha. You have not written to me this long while.

Fred. Dear mother, consider the great distance I was from you!—And then, in the time of war, how often letters miscarry.—Besides——

Agatha. No matter, now I see you. But have you obtained your discharge?

Fred. Oh, no, mother—I have leave of absence only for two months; and that for a particular reason. But I will not quit you so soon, now I find you are in want of my assistance.

Agatha. No, no, Frederick; your visit will make me so well, that I shall in a very short time recover strength to work again; and you must return to your regiment, when your furlough is expired. But you told me leave of absence was granted you for a particular reason.—What reason?

Fred. When I left you, five years ago, you gave me every thing you could afford, and all you thought would be necessary for me. But one trifle you forgot, which was, the certificate of my birth from the church-book. You know in this country there is nothing to be done without it. At the time of parting from you, I little thought it could be of that consequence to me, which I have since found it would have been. Once I became tired of a soldier's life, and in the hope I should obtain my discharge, offered myself to a master to learn a profession; but his question was, "Where is your certificate from the *church*-book of the parish, in which you were born?" It vexed me that I had not it to produce, for my comrades laughed at my disappointment. My captain behaved kinder, for he gave me leave to come home to fetch it—and you see, mother, here I am.

[*During this speech,* AGATHA *is confused and agitated.*

Agatha. So, you are come for the purpose of fetching your certificate from the church-book.

Fred. Yes, mother.

Agatha. Oh! oh!

Fred. What is the matter? [*She bursts into tears.*] For Heaven's sake, mother, tell me what's the matter?

Agatha. You have no certificate.

Fred. No!

Agatha. No.—The laws of Germany excluded you

from being registered at your birth—for—you are a natural son.

Fred. [*Starts*]—[*After a pause.*] So!—And who is my father?

Agatha. Oh, Frederick, your wild looks are daggers to my heart. Another time.

Fred. [*Endeavouring to conceal his emotion.*] No, no—I am still your son—and you are still my mother. Only tell me, who is my father?

Agatha. When we parted, five years ago, you were too young to be intrusted with a secret of so much importance.—But the time is come, when I can, in confidence, open my heart, and unload that burthen, with which it has been long oppressed. And yet, to reveal my errors to my child, and sue for his mild judgment on my conduct—

Fred. You have nothing to sue for; only explain this mystery.

Agatha. I will. I will. But—my tongue is locked with remorse and shame. You must not look at me.

Fred. Not look at you! Cursed be that son, who could find his mother guilty, although the world should call her so.

Agatha. Then listen to me, and take notice of that village, [*Pointing.*] of that castle, and of that church. In that village I was born—In that church I was baptized. My parents were poor, but reputable farmers.—The lady of that castle and estate requested them to let me live with her, and she would provide for me through life. They resigned me; and, at the age of fourteen, I went to my patroness. She took pleasure to instruct me in all kind of female literature and accomplishments, and three happy years had passed, under her protection, when her only son, who was an officer in the Saxon service, obtained permission to come home. I had never seen him before—he was a handsome young man—in my eyes a prodigy; for he talked of love, and promised me marriage. He was

the first man, who had ever spoke to me on such a subject.—His flattery made me vain, and his repeated vows——Don't look at me, dear Frederick!—I can say no more. [FREDERICK, *with his eyes cast down, takes her hand, and puts it to his heart.*] Oh! oh! my son! I was intoxicated by the fervent caresses of a young, inexperienced, capricious man, and did not recover from the delirium till it was too late.

Fred. [*After a pause.*] Go on.—Let me know more of my father.

Agatha. When the time drew near that I could no longer conceal my guilt and shame, my seducer prevailed on me not to expose him to the resentment of his mother. He renewed his former promises of marriage at her death;—on which relying, I gave him my word to be secret—and I have to this hour buried his name deep in my heart.

Fred. Proceed, proceed! give me full information ——I will have courage to hear it all.

[*Greatly agitated.*]

Agatha. His leave of absence expired, he returned to his regiment, depending on my promise, and well assured of my esteem. As soon as my situation became known, I was questioned, and received many severe reproaches: but I refused to confess who was my undoer; and for that obstinacy was turned from the castle.—I went to my parents; but their door was shut against me. My mother, indeed, wept as she bade me quit her sight for ever; but my father wished,—that increased affliction might befal me.

Fred. [*Weeping.*] Be quick with your narrative, or you'll break my heart.

Agatha. I now sought protection from the old clergyman of the parish. He received me with compassion. On my knees I begged forgiveness for the scandal I had caused to his parishioners; promised amendment; and he said he did not doubt

me. Through his recommendation I went to town; and, hid in humble lodgings, procured the means of subsistence by teaching to the neighbouring children what I had learnt under the tuition of my benefactress.—To instruct you, my Frederick, was my care and my delight; and, in return for your filial love, I would not thwart your wishes, when they led to a soldier's life: but I saw you go from me with an aching heart. Soon after, my health declined, I was compelled to give up my employment, and, by degrees, became the object you now see me. But, let me add, before I close my calamitous story, that—when I left the good old clergyman, taking along with me his kind advice and his blessing, I left him with a firm determination to fulfil the vow I had made of repentance and amendment. I *have* fulfilled it—and now, Frederick, you may look at me again.

[*He embraces her.*

Fred. But my father all this time? [*Mournfully.*] I apprehend he died.

Agatha. No—he married.

Fred. Married!

Agatha. A woman of virtue——of noble birth and immense fortune. Yet, [*Weeps.*] I had written to him many times; had described your infant innocence and wants; had glanced obliquely at former promises——

Fred. [*Rapidly.*] No answer to these letters?

Agatha. Not a word.—But in the time of war, you know, letters miscarry.

Fred. Nor did he ever return to this estate?

Agatha. No—since the death of his mother this castle has only been inhabited by servants—for he settled as far off as Alsace, upon the estate of his wife.

Fred. I will carry you in my arms to Alsace. No—why should I ever know my father, if he is a villain! My heart is satisfied with a mother.—No—I

will not go to him. I will not disturb his peace—I leave that task to his conscience. What say you, mother, can't we do without him? [*Struggling between his tears and his pride.*] We don't want him. I will write directly to my captain. Let the consequence be what it will, leave you again I cannot. Should I be able to get my discharge, I will work all day at the plough, and all the night with my pen. It will do, mother, it will do! Heaven's goodness will assist me—it will prosper the endeavours of a dutiful son for the sake of a helpless mother.

Agatha. [*Presses him to her breast.*] Where could be found such another son?

Fred. But tell me my father's name, that I may know how to shun him.

Agatha. Baron Wildenhaim.

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim! I shall never forget it. —Oh! you are near fainting. Your eyes are cast down. What's the matter? Speak, mother!

Agatha. Nothing particular.—Only fatigued with talking, I wish to take a little rest.

Fred. I did not consider, that we have been all this time in the open road. [*Goes to the inn, and knocks at the door.*] Here, Landlord!

LANDLORD *re-enters.*

Land. Well, what is the matter now?

Fred. Make haste, and get a bed ready for this good woman.

Land. [*With a sneer.*] A bed for this good woman! Ha! ha! ha! She slept last night in that pent-house; so she may to-night, [*Exit, shutting the door.*

Fred. You are an infamous—[*Goes back to his mother.*] Oh! my poor mother—[*Runs to the cottage at a little distance, and knocks.*] Ha! halloo! Who is there?

Enter COTTAGER.

Cot. Good day, young soldier.—What is it you want?

Fred. Good friend, look at that poor woman. She is perishing in the public road! It is my mother.—Will you give her a small corner in your hut? I beg for mercy's sake—Heaven will reward you.

Cot. Can't you speak quietly? I understand you very well. [*Calls at the door of the hut.*] Wife, shake up our bed—here's a poor sick woman wants it.

Enter WIFE.

Why could not you say all this in fewer words? Why such a long preamble? Why for mercy's sake, and Heaven's reward; Why talk about reward for such trifles as these? Come, let us lead her in; and welcome she shall be to a bed, as good as I can give her; and to our homely fare.

Fred. Ten thousand thanks, and blessings on you!

Wife. Thanks and blessings! here's a piece of work indeed about nothing! Good sick lady, lean on my shoulder. [*To* FREDERICK.] Thanks and reward, indeed! Do you think husband and I have lived to these years, and don't know our duty? Lean on my shoulder. *Exeunt into the Cottage.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A room in the Cottage.

AGATHA, COTTAGER, *his* WIFE, *and* FREDERICK *discovered*—AGATHA *reclining upon a wooden bench.* FREDERICK *leaning over her.*

Fred. Good people, have you nothing to give her? Nothing that's nourishing?

Wife. Run, husband, run, and fetch a bottle of wine from the landlord of the inn.

Fred. No, no—his wine is as bad as his heart: she has drank some of it, which I am afraid has turned to poison.

Cot. Suppose, wife, you look for a new laid egg?

Wife. Or a drop of brandy, husband—that mostly cures me.

Fred. Do you hear, mother—will you, mother? [AGATHA *makes a sign with her hand as if she could not take any thing.*] She will not. Is there no doctor in this neighbourhood.

Wife. At the end of the village there lives a horse doctor. I have never heard of any other.

Fred. What shall I do? She is dying. My mother is dying—Pray for her, good people!

Agatha. Make yourself easy, dear Frederick, I am well, only weak—Some wholesome nourishment—

Fred. Yes, mother, directly—directly. [*Aside.*] Oh! where shall I—no money—not a farthing left.

Wife. Oh, dear me! Had you not paid the rent yesterday, husband—

Cot. I then should know what to do. But as I hope for mercy, I have not a penny in my house.

Fred. Then I must—[*Apart, coming forward.*]—Yes, I will go, and beg.—But should I be refused—I will then—I leave my mother in your care, good people—Do all you can for her, I beseech you! I shall soon be with you again. [*Goes off in haste and confusion.*]

Cot. If he should go to our parson, I am sure he would give him something.

[AGATHA *having revived by degrees during the scenes, rises.*]

Agatha. Is that good old man still living, who was minister here some time ago?

Wife. No—It pleased Providence to take that worthy man to Heaven two years ago. We have lost

in him both a friend and a father. We shall never get such another.

Cot. Wife, wife, our present rector is likewise a very good man.

Wife. Yes! But he is so very young.

Cot. Our late parson was young once.

Wife. [*To* AGATHA.] This young man being tutor in our Baron's family, he is very much beloved by them all; and so the Baron gave him this living in consequence.

Cot. And well he deserved it, for his pious instructions to our young lady; who is, in consequence, good, and friendly to every body.

Agatha. What young lady do you mean?

Cot. Our Baron's daughter.

Agatha. Is she here?

Wife. Dear me! Don't you know that? I thought every body had known that. It is almost five weeks since the Baron and all his family arrived at the castle.

Agatha. Baron Wildenhaim?

Wife. Yes, Baron Wildenhaim.

Agatha. And his lady?

Cot. His lady died in France, many miles from hence, and her death, I suppose, was the cause of his coming to this estate—For the Baron has not been here till within these five weeks ever since he was married. We regretted his absence much, and his arrival has caused great joy.

Wife. [*Addressing her discourse to* AGATHA.] By all accounts the Baroness was very haughty, and very whimsical.

Cot. Wife, wife, never speak ill of the dead. Say what you please against the living, but not a word against the dead.

Wife. And yet, husband, I believe the dead care the least what is said against them.—And so, if you please, I'll tell my story. The late Baroness was,

they say, haughty and proud; and they do say, the Baron was not so happy as he might have been;—but he, bless him, our good Baron is still the same as when a boy. Soon after madam had closed her eyes, he left France, and came to Wildenhaim, his native country.

Cot. Many times has he joined in our village dances. Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild, as most young men are.

Wife. Yes, I remember when he fell in love with poor Agatha, Friburg's daughter: what a piece of work that was—It did not do him much credit. That was a wicked thing.

Cot. Have done—no more of this—It is not well to stir up old grievances.

Wife. Why you said I might speak ill of the living. 'Tis very hard indeed, if one must not speak ill of one's neighbours, dead, or alive.

Cot. Who knows whether he was the father of Agatha's child? She never said he was.

Wife. Nobody but him—that I am sure—I would lay a wager—no, no, husband, you must not take his part—it is very wicked! Who knows what is now become of that poor creature? She has not been heard of this many a year. May be she is starving for hunger. Her father might have lived longer too, if that misfortune had not happened.

[AGATHA *faints.*

Cot. See here! Help! She is fainting—take hold;

Wife. Oh, poor woman!

Cot. Let us take her into the next room.

Wife. Oh, poor woman!—I am afraid she will not live. Come cheer up, cheer up. You are with those who feel for you. [*They lead her off.*]

SCENE II.

An apartment in the Castle.

A table spread for breakfast—Several Servants in livery disposing the equipage—BARON WILDENHAIM *enters, attended by a* GENTLEMAN *in waiting.*

Baron. Has not Count Cassel left his chamber yet?

Gent. No, my lord, he has but now rung for his valet.

Baron. The whole castle smells of his perfumery. Go, call my daughter hither. [*Exit* GENTLEMAN.] And am I after all to have an ape for a son-in-law? No, I shall not be in a hurry—I love my daughter too well. We must be better acquainted before I give her to him. I shall not sacrifice my Amelia to the will of others, as I myself was sacrificed. The poor girl might, in thoughtlessness, say yes, and afterwards be miserable. What a pity she is not a boy! The name of Wildenhaim will die with me. My fine estates, my good peasants, all will fall into the hands of strangers. Oh! why was not Amelia a boy?

Enter AMELIA—[*She kisses the* BARON'S *hand.*]

Amelia. Good morning, dear my lord.

Baron. Good morning, Amelia. Have you slept well?

Amelia. Oh! yes, papa. I always sleep well.

Baron. Not a little restless last night?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Amelia, you know you have a father, who loves you, and I believe you know you have a suitor who is come to ask permission to love you. Tell me candidly how you like Count Cassel.

Amelia. Very well.

Baron. Do not you blush, when I talk of him?

Amelia. No.

Baron. No:—I am sorry for that. [*Aside.*]—Have you dreamt of him?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Have you not dreamt at all to-night?

Amelia. Oh yes—I have dreamt of our Chaplain, Mr. Anhalt.

Baron. Ah ha! As if he stood before you and the Count to ask for the ring.

Amelia. No: not that—I dreamt we were all still in France, and he, my tutor, just going to take his leave of us for ever.—I 'woke with the fright, and found my eyes full of tears.

Baron. Psha! I want to know if you can love the Count. You saw him at the last ball we were at in France: when he capered round you; when he danced minuets; when he——. But I cannot say what his conversation was.

Amelia. Nor I either—I do not remember a syllable of it.

Baron. No? Then I do not think you like him.

Amelia. I believe not.

Baron. But I think proper to acquaint you, he is rich, and of great consequence: rich, and of great consequence; do you hear?

Amelia. Yes, dear papa. But my tutor has always told me, that birth and fortune are inconsiderable things, and cannot give happiness.

Baron. There he is right—But if it happens, that birth and fortune are joined with sense and virtue——

Amelia. But is it so with Count Cassel?

Baron. Hem! Hem! [*Aside.*] I will ask you a few questions on this subject; but be sure to answer me honestly—Speak the truth.

Amelia. I never told an untruth in my life.

Baron. Nor ever *conceal* the truth from me, I command you.

Amelia. [*Earnestly.*] Indeed, my lord, I never will.

Baron. I take you at your word—And now reply to me truly—Do you like to hear the Count spoken of?

Amelia. Good, or bad?

Baron. Good. Good.

Amelia. Oh yes; I like to hear good of every body.

Baron. But do not you feel a little fluttered, when he is talked of?

Amelia. No. [*Shaking her head.*

Baron. Are not you a little embarassed?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Don't you wish sometimes to speak to him, and have not the courage to begin?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Do not you wish to take his part, when his companions laugh at him?

Amelia. No—I love to laugh at him myself.

Baron. Provoking! [*Aside.*] Are not you afraid of him, when he comes near you?

Amelia. No, not at all.—Oh, yes—once. [*Recollecting herself.*

Baron. Ah! Now it comes!

Amelia. Once at a ball he trod on my foot; and I was so afraid he should tread on me again.

Baron. You put me out of patience. Hear me, Amelia! [*Stops short, and speaks softer.*] To see you happy is my wish. But matrimony, without concord, is like a duetto badly performed; for that reason, nature, the great composer of all harmony, has ordained, that, when bodies are allied, hearts should be in perfect unison. However, I will send Mr. Anhalt to you——

Amelia. [*Much pleased.*] Do, papa.

Baron. He shall explain to you my sentiments. [*Rings.*] A clergyman can do this better than——,

Enter SERVANT.

Go, directly to Mr. Anhalt, tell him I shall be glad

to see him for a quarter of an hour, if he is not engaged. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Amelia. [*Calls after him.*] Wish him a good morning from me.

Baron. [*Looking at his watch.*] The Count is a tedious time dressing.—Have you breakfasted, Amelia?

Amelia. No, papa. [*They sit down to breakfast.*

Baron. How is the weather? Have you walked this morning?

Amelia. Oh, yes—I was in the garden at five o'clock; it is very fine.

Baron. Then I'll go out shooting. I do not know in what other way to amuse my guest.

Enter COUNT CASSEL.

Count. Ah, my dear Colonel! Miss Wildenhaim, I kiss your hand.

Baron. Good morning! good morning! though it is late in the day, Count. In the country we should rise earlier.

[AMELIA *offers the* COUNT *a cup of tea.*

Count. It is Hebe herself, or Venus, or——

Amelia. Ha! ha! ha! Who can help laughing at his nonsense?

Baron. [*Rather angry.*] Neither Venus, nor Hebe; but Amelia Wildenhaim, if you please.

Count. [*Sitting down to breakfast.*] You are beautiful, Miss Wildenhaim.—Upon my honour, I think so. I have travelled, and seen much of the world, and yet I can positively admire you.

Amelia. I am sorry I have not seen the world.

Count. Wherefore?

Amelia. Because I might then, perhaps, admire you.

Count. True;—for I am an epitome of the world. In my travels I learnt delicacy in Italy—hauteur, in Spain—in France, enterprize—in Russia, prudence

—in England, sincerity—in Scotland, frugality—and in the wilds of America, I learnt love.

Amelia. Is there any country where love is taught?

Count. In all barbarous countries. But the whole system is exploded in places that are civilized.

Amelia. And what is substituted in its stead?

Count. Intrigue.

Amelia. What a poor, uncomfortable substitute!

Count. There are other things—Song, dance, the opera, and war.

[*Since the entrance of the* COUNT, *the* BARON *has removed to a table at a little distance.*

Baron. What are you talking of there?

Count. Of war, Colonel.

Baron. [*Rising.*] Ay, we like to talk on what we don't understand.

Count. [*Rising.*] Therefore, to a lady, I always speak of politics; and to her father, on love.

Baron. I believe, Count, notwithstanding your sneer, I am still as much of a proficient in that art as yourself.

Count. I do not doubt it, my dear Colonel, for you are a soldier: and, since the days of Alexander, whoever conquers men, is certain to overcome women.

Baron. An achievement to animate a poltron.

Count. And, I verily believe, gains more recruits than the king's pay.

Baron. Now we are on the subject of arms, should you like to go out a shooting with me for an hour before dinner?

Count. Bravo, Colonel! A charming thought! This will give me an opportunity to use my elegant gun: the butt is inlaid with mother-of-pearl. You cannot find better work, or better taste.—Even my coat, of arms is engraved.

Baron. But can you shoot?

Count. That I have never tried—except, with my eyes, at a fine woman.

Baron. I am not particular what game I pursue.—I have an old gun; it does not look fine; but I can always bring down my bird.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Anhalt begs leave——

Baron. Tell him to come in.—I shall be ready in a moment. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Count. Who is Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. Oh, a very good man. [*With warmth.*

Count. A good man! In Italy, that means a religious man; in France, it means a cheerful man; in Spain, it means a wise man; and in England, it means a rich man.—Which good man of all these is Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. A good man in every country, except England.

Count. And give me the English good man, before that of any other nation.

Baron. And of what nation would you prefer your good woman to be, Count?

Count. Of Germany. [*Bowing to* AMELIA.

Amelia. In compliment to me?

Count. In justice to my own judgment.

Baron. Certainly. For have we not an instance of one German woman, who possesses every virtue that ornaments the whole sex; whether as a woman of illustrious rank, or in the more exalted character of a wife, and a mother?

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. I come by your command, Baron——

Baron. Quick, Count.—Get your elegant gun.—I pass your apartments, and will soon call for you.

Count. I fly.—Beautiful Amelia, it is a sacrifice I make to your father, that I leave for a few hours his amiable daughter. [*Exit.*

Baron. My dear Amelia, I think it scarcely neces-

sary to speak to Mr. Anhalt, or that he should speak to you, on the subject of the Count; but as he is here, leave us alone.

Amelia. [*As she retires.*] Good morning, Mr. Anhalt. —I hope you are very well. [*Exit.*

Baron. I'll tell you in a few words, why I sent for you. Count Cassel is here, and wishes to marry my daughter.

Anhalt. [*Much concerned.*] Really!

Baron. He is—he—in a word, I don't like him.

Anhalt. [*With emotion.*] And Miss Wildenhaim——

Baron. I shall not command, neither persuade her to the marriage—I know too well the fatal influence of parents on such a subject. Objections to be sure, if they could be removed—But when you find a man's head without brains, and his bosom without a heart, these are important articles to supply. Young as you are, Anhalt, I know no one so able to restore, or to bestow, those blessings on his fellow creatures, as you. [ANHALT *bows.*] The Count wants a little of my daughter's simplicity and sensibility.—Take him under your care while he is here, and make him something like yourself.—You have succeeded to my wish in the education of my daughter.—Form the Count after your own manner.—I shall then have what I have sighed for all my life—a son.

Anhalt. With your permission, Baron, I will ask one question. What remains to interest you in favour of a man, whose head and heart are good for nothing?

Baron. Birth and fortune. Yet, if I thought my daughter absolutely disliked him, or that she loved another, I would not thwart a first affection;—no, for the world, I would not. [*Sighing.*] But that her affections are already bestowed, is not probable.

Anhalt. Are you of opinion, that she will never fall in love?

Baron. Oh! no. I am of opinion, no woman ever

arrived at the age of twenty without that misfortune.—But this is another subject.—Go to Amelia—explain to her the duties of a wife, and of a mother.—If she comprehends them, as she ought, then ask her, if she thinks she could fulfil those duties, as the wife of Count Cassel.

Anhalt. I will.—But—I—Miss Wildenhaim—[*Confused.*] I—I shall—I—I shall obey your commands.

Baron. Do so. [*Gives a deep sigh.*] Ah! so far this weight is removed; but there lies still a heavier next my heart.—You understand me.—How is it, Mr. Anhalt? Have you not yet been able to make any discoveries on that unfortunate subject?

Anhalt. I have taken infinite pains; but in vain. No such person is to be found.

Baron. Believe me, this burthen presses on my thoughts so much, that many nights I go without sleep. A man is sometimes tempted to commit such depravity when young.—Oh, Anhalt! had I, in my youth, had you for a tutor;—but I had no instructor but my passions; no governor but my own will.

[*Exit.*

Anhalt. This commission of the Baron's, in respect to his daughter, I am—[*Looks about.*]—If I should meet her now, I cannot—I must recover myself first, and then prepare.—A walk in the fields, and a fervent prayer—After these, I trust, I shall return, as a man, whose views are solely placed on a future world; all hopes in this, with fortitude resigned. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

An open Field.

FREDERICK *alone, with a few pieces of money, which he turns about in his hands.*

Fred. To return with this trifle, for which I have stooped to beg! return to see my mother dying! I would rather fly to the world's end. [*Looking at the money.*] What can I buy with this? It is hardly enough to pay for the nails, that will be wanted for her coffin. My great anxiety will drive me to distraction. However, let the consequence of our affliction be what it may, all will fall upon my father's head; and may he pant for Heaven's forgiveness, as my poor mother——[*At a distance is heard the firing of a gun, then the cry of halloo, halloo*—GAMEKEEPERS *and* SPORTSMEN *run across the stage—he looks about.*] Here they come—a nobleman, I suppose, or a man of fortune. Yes, yes—and I will once more beg for my mother.—May Heaven send relief!

Enter the BARON, *followed slowly by the* COUNT. *The* BARON *stops.*

Baron. Quick, quick, Count! Aye, aye, that was a blunder, indeed. Don't you see the dogs? There they run—they have lost the scent.

[*Exit* BARON, *looking after the dogs.*

Count. So much the better, Colonel, for I must take a little breath.

[*He leans on his gun*—FREDERICK *goes up to him with great modesty.*

Fred. Gentleman, I beg you will bestow from your superfluous wants something to relieve the pain, and nourish the weak frame, of an expiring woman.

The BARON *re-enters.*

Count. What police is here! that a nobleman's amusements should be interrupted by the attack of vagrants.

Fred. [*To the* BARON.] Have pity, noble sir, and relieve the distress of an unfortunate son, who supplicates for his dying mother.

Baron. [*Taking out his purse.*] I think, young soldier, it would be better if you were with your regiment on duty, instead of begging.

Fred. I would with all my heart: but at this present moment my sorrows are too great.—[BARON *gives something.*] I entreat your pardon. What you have been so good as to give me, is not enough.

Baron. [*Surprised.*] Not enough!

Fred. No, it is not enough.

Count. The most singular beggar I ever met in all my travels.

Fred. If you have a charitable heart, give me one dollar.

Baron. This is the first time I was ever dictated by a beggar what to give him.

Fred. With one dollar you will save a distracted man.

Baron. I dont choose to give any more. Count, go on.

[*Exit* COUNT—*as the* BARON *follows,* FREDERICK *seizes him by the breast, and draws his sword.*]

Fred. Your purse, or your life.

Baron. [*Calling.*] Here! here! seize and secure him.

[*Some of the* GAMEKEEPERS *run on, lay hold of* FREDERICK, *and disarm him.*]

Fred. What have I done!

Baron. Take him to the castle, and confine him in one of the towers. I shall follow you immediately.

Fred. One favour I have to beg, one favour only.

—I know that I am guilty, and am ready to receive the punishment, my crime deserves. But I have a mother, who is expiring for want—pity her, if you cannot pity me—bestow on her relief. If you will send to yonder hut, you will find that I do not impose on you a falsehood. For her it was I drew my sword—for her I am ready to die.

Baron. Take him away, and imprison him where I told you.

Fred. [*As he is forced off.*] Woe to that man, to whom I owe my birth. [*Exit.*

Baron. [*Calls another* KEEPER.] Here, Frank, run directly to yonder hamlet, inquire in the first, second, and third, cottage for a poor sick woman—and if you really find such a person, give her this purse.

[*Exit* GAMEKEEPER.

Baron. A most extraordinary event!—and what a well-looking youth! something in his countenance and address, which struck me inconceivably!—If it is true, that he begged for his mother—But if he did ——for the attempt upon my life, he must die. Vice is never, half so dangerous, as when it assumes the garb of morality. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A room in the Castle.

AMELIA *alone.*

Amelia. Why am I so uneasy; so peevish; who has offended me? I did not mean to come into this room. In the garden I intended to go. [*Going, turns back.*] No, I will not—yes, I will—just go, and look if my auriculas are still in blossom; and if the apple-tree is grown, which Mr. Anhalt planted.—I feel very low-spirited—something must be the matter.—Why do I cry?—Am I not well?

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Ah! good morning, my dear sir—Mr. Anhalt, I meant to say—I beg pardon.

Anhalt. Never mind, Miss Wildenhaim—I don't dislike to hear you call me as you did.

Amelia. In earnest!

Anhalt. Really. You have been crying. May I know the reason? The loss of your mother, still?—

Amelia. No—I have left off crying for her.

Anhalt. I beg pardon if I have come at an improper hour; but I wait upon you by the commands of your father.

Amelia. You are welcome at all hours. My father has more than once told me, that he, who forms my mind, I should always consider as my greatest benefactor. [*Looking down.*] And my heart tells me the same.

Anhalt. I think myself amply rewarded by the good opinion you have of me.

Amelia. When I remember what trouble I have sometimes given you, I cannot be too grateful.

Anhalt. [*To himself.*] Oh! Heavens! *To* [AMELIA.] I—I come from your father with a commission.—If you please, we will sit down. [*He places chairs, and they sit.*] Count Cassel is arrived.

Amelia. Yes, I know.

Anhalt. And do you know for what reason?

Amelia. He wishes to marry me.

Anhalt. Does he? [*Hastily.*] But, believe me, the Baron will not persuade you—No, I am sure he will not.

Amelia. I know that.

Anhalt. He wishes, that I should ascertain whether you have an inclination——

Amelia. For the Count, or for matrimony, do you mean?

Anhalt. For matrimony.

Amelia. All things, that I don't know, and don't understand, are quite indifferent to me.

Anhalt. For that very reason I am sent to you to explain the good and the bad, of which matrimony is composed.

Amelia. Then I beg first to be acquainted with the good.

Anhalt. When two sympathetic hearts meet in the marriage state, matrimony may be called a happy life. When such a wedded pair find thorns in their path, each will be eager, for the sake of the other, to tear them from the root. Where they have to mount hills, or wind a labyrinth, the most experienced will lead the way, and be a guide to his companion. Patience and love will accompany them in their journey, while melancholy and discord they leave far behind.—Hand in hand they pass on from morning till evening, through their summer's day, till the night of age draws on, and the sleep of death overtakes the one. The other, weeping and mourning, yet looks forward to the bright region, where he shall meet his still surviving partner, among trees and flowers, which themselves have planted, in the fields of eternal verdure.

Amelia. You may tell my father—I'll marry. [*Rises.*

Anhalt. [*Rising.*] This picture is pleasing; but I must beg you not to forget, that there is another on the same subject.—When convenience, and fair appearance joined to folly and ill humour, forge the fetters of matrimony, they gall with their weight the married pair. Discontented with each other—at variance in opinions—their mutual aversion increases with the years they live together. They contend most, where they should most unite; torment, where they should most soothe. In this rugged way, choked with the weeds of suspicion, jealousy, anger, and hatred, they take their daily journey, till one of these also sleep in death. The other then lifts up his de-

jected head, and calls out in acclamations of joy—Oh, liberty! dear liberty!

Amelia. I will not marry.

Anhalt. You mean to say, you will not fall in love.

Amelia. Oh no! [*Ashamed.*] I am in love.

Anhalt. Are in love! [*Starting.*] And with the Count?

Amelia. I wish I was.

Anhalt. Why so?

Amelia. Because *he* would, perhaps, love me again.

Anhalt. [*Warmly.*] Who is there that would not?

Amelia. Would you?

Anhalt. I—I—me—I—I am out of the question.

Amelia. No; you are the very person to whom I have put the question.

Anhalt. What do you mean?

Amelia. I am glad you don't understand me. I was afraid I had spoken too plain. [*In confusion.*

Anhalt. Understand you!—As to that—I am not dull.

Amelia. I know you are not—And as you have for a long time instructed me, why should not I now begin to teach you?

Anhalt. Teach me what?

Amelia. Whatever I know, and you don't.

Anhalt. There are some things, I had rather never know.

Amelia. So you may remember I said, when you began to teach me mathematics. I said, I had rather not know it—But now I have learnt it, it gives me a great deal of pleasure—and [*Hesitating.*] perhaps, who can tell, but that I might teach something as pleasant to you, as resolving a problem is to me.

Anhalt. Woman herself is a problem.

Amelia. And I'll teach you to make her out.

Anhalt. You teach?

Amelia. Why not? None but a woman can teach the science of herself: and though I own I am very

young, a young woman may be as agreeable for a tutoress as an old one.—I am sure I always learnt faster from you than from the old clergyman, who taught me before you came.

Anhalt. This is nothing to the subject!

Amelia. What is the subject?

Anhalt. ——Love.

Amelia. [*Going up to him.*] Come, then, teach it me—teach it me as you taught me geography, languages, and other important things.

Anhalt. [*Turning from her.*] Pshaw!

Amelia. Ah! you won't—You know you have already taught me that, and you won't begin again.

Anhalt. You misconstrue—you misconceive every thing, I say or do. The subject I came to you upon was marriage.

Amelia. A very proper subject for the man, who has taught me love, and I accept the proposal.

[*Courtesying.*

Anhalt. Again you misconceive and confound me.

Amelia. Ay, I see how it is—You have no inclination to experience with me "the good part of matrimony:" I am not the female, with whom you would like to go "hand in hand up hills, and through labyrinths"—with whom you would like to "root up thorns; and with whom you would delight to plant lilies and roses." No, you had rather call out, "Oh, liberty! dear liberty!"

Anhalt. Why do you force from me, what it is villanous to own?—I love you more than life—Oh, Amelia! had we lived in those golden times, which the poets picture, no one but you——But, as the world is changed, your birth and fortune make our union impossible—To preserve the character, and, more, the feelings of an honest man, I would not marry you without the consent of your father—And could I, dare I, propose it to him?

Amelia. He has commanded me never to conceal

or disguise the truth. I will propose it to him. The subject of the Count will force me to speak plainly, and this will be the most proper time, while he can compare the merit of you both.

Anhalt. I conjure you not to think of exposing yourself and me to his resentment.

Amelia. It is my father's will that I should marry —It is my father's wish to see me happy—If, then, you love me as you say, I will marry; and will be happy—but only with you.—I will tell him this.— At first he will start; then grow angry; then be in a passion—In his passion he will call me "undutiful:" but he will soon recollect himself, and resume his usual smiles, saying, "Well, well, if he love you, and you love him, in the name of Heaven, let it be."— Then I shall hug him round the neck, kiss his hands, run away from him, and fly to you; it will soon be known, that I am your bride, the whole village will come to wish me joy, and Heaven's blessing will follow.

Enter VERDUN, *the Butler.*

Amelia. [*Discontented.*] Ah! is it you?

Butler. Without vanity, I have taken the liberty to enter this apartment, the moment the good news reached my ears.

Amelia. What news?

Butler. Pardon an old servant, your father's old butler, gracious lady, who has had the honour to carry the Baron in his arms—and afterwards with humble submission to receive many a box o' the ear from you —if he thinks it his duty to make his congratulations, with due reverence on this happy day, and to join with the muses in harmonious tunes on the lyre.

Amelia. Oh! my good butler, I am not in a humour to listen to the muses, and your lyre.

Butler. There has never been a birth-day, nor wedding-day, nor christening-day, celebrated in your

family, in which I have not joined with the muses in full chorus.—In forty-six years, three hundred and ninety-seven congratulations on different occasions have dropped from my pen. To-day, the three hundred and ninety-eighth is coming forth;—for Heaven has protected our noble master, who has been in great danger.

Amelia. Danger! My father in danger! What do you mean?

Butler. One of the gamekeepers has returned to inform the whole castle of a base and knavish trick, of which the world will talk, and my poetry hand down to posterity.

Amelia. What, what is all this?

Butler. The Baron, my lord and master, in company with the strange Count, had not been gone a mile beyond the lawn, when one of them——

Amelia. What happened? Speak, for Heaven's sake!

Butler. My verse shall tell you.

Amelia. No, no; tell us in prose.

Anhalt. Yes, in prose.

Butler. Ah, you have neither of you ever been in love, or you would prefer poetry to prose. But excuse [*Pulls out a paper.*] the haste in which it was written. I heard the news in the fields—always have paper and a pencil about me, and composed the whole forty lines crossing the meadows and the park in my way home. [*Reads.*]

Oh Muse, ascend the forked mount,
And lofty strains prepare,
About a Baron and a Count,
Who went to hunt the hare.

The hare she ran with utmost speed,
And sad and anxious looks,
Because the furious hounds indeed
Were near to her, gadzooks.

At length the Count and Baron bold,
Their footsteps homeward bended;
For why, because, as you were told,
The hunting it was ended.

Before them strait a youth appears,
Who made a piteous pother,
And told a tale with many tears,
About his dying mother.

The youth was in severe distress,
And seem'd as he had spent all,
He look'd a soldier by his dress,
For that was regimental.

The Baron's heart was full of ruth,
And from his eye fell brine o!
And soon he gave the mournful youth
A little ready rino.

He gave a shilling, as I live,
Which sure, was mighty well;
But to some people if you give
An inch—they'll take an ell.

The youth then drew his martial knife,
And seiz'd the Baron's collar,
He swore he'd have the Baron's life,
Or else another dollar.

Then did the Baron, in a fume,
Soon raise a mighty din,
Whereon came butler, huntsman, groom,
And eke the whipper-in.

Maugre this young man's warlike coat,
They bore him off to prison;
And held so strongly by his throat,
And almost stopp'd his whizzen.

Soon may a neckloth, call'd a rope,
Of robbing cure this elf;
If so, I'll write, without a trope,
His dying speech myself.

And had the Baron chanc'd to die,
Oh! grief to all the nation,
I must have made an elegy,
And not this fine narration.

MORAL.

Henceforth let those who all have spent,
And would by begging live,
Take warning here, and be content
With what folks chuse to give.

Amelia. Your muse, Mr. Butler, is in a very inventive humour this morning.

Anhalt. And your tale too improbable even for fiction.

Butler. Improbable! It's a real fact.

Amelia. What, a robber in our grounds at noonday? Very likely indeed!

Butler. I don't say it was likely—I only say it is true.

Anhalt. No, no, Mr. Verdun, we find no fault with your poetry; but don't attempt to impose it upon us for truth.

Amelia. Poets are allowed to speak falsehood, and we forgive yours.

Butler. I won't be forgiven, for I speak truth—and here the robber comes, in custody, to prove my words. [*Goes off, repeating*] "I'll write his dying speech myself."

Amelia. Look! as I live, so he does—They come nearer; he's a young man, and has something interesting in his figure. An honest countenance, with grief and sorrow in his face. No, he is no robber—I pity him! Oh! look how the keepers drag him unmercifully into the tower—Now they lock it—Oh! how that poor, unfortunate man must feel!

Anhalt. [*Aside.*] Hardly worse than I do.

Enter the BARON.

Amelia. [*Runs up to him.*] A thousand congratulations, my dear papa.

Baron. For Heaven's sake, spare your congratulations. The old butler, in coming up stairs, has already overwhelmed me with them.

Anhalt. Then, it is true, my lord? I could hardly believe the old man.

Amelia. And the young prisoner, with all his honest looks, is a robber?

Baron. He is; but I verily believe for the first and last time. A most extraordinary event, Mr. Anhalt. This young man begged; then drew his sword upon me; but he trembled so, when he seized me by the breast, a child might have overpowered him. I almost wish he had made his escape—this adventure may cost him his life, and I might have preserved it with one dollar: but now, to save him would set a bad example.

Amelia. Oh no! my lord, have pity on him! Plead for him, Mr. Anhalt.

Baron. Amelia, have you had any conversation with Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. Yes, my lord.

Baron. Respecting matrimony?

Amelia. Yes; and I have told him——

Anhalt. [*Very hastily.*] According to your commands, Baron——

Amelia. But he has conjured me——

Anhalt. I have endeavoured, my lord, to find out——

Amelia. Yet, I am sure, dear papa, your affection for me——

Anhalt. You wish to say something to me in your closet, my lord?

Baron. What the devil is all this conversation? You will not let one another speak—I don't understand either of you.

Amelia. Dear father, have you not promised you will not thwart my affections when I marry, but suffer me to follow their dictates?

Baron. Certainly.

Amelia. Do you hear, Mr. Anhalt?

Anhalt. I beg pardon—I have a person who is waiting for me—I am obliged to retire.

[*Exit in confusion.*

Baron. [*Calls after him.*] I shall expect you in my closet. I am going there immediately.

[*Retiring towards the opposite door.*

Amelia. Pray, my lord, stop a few minutes longer; I have something of great importance to say to you.

Baron. Something of importance! to plead for the young man, I suppose! But that's a subject I must not listen to. [*Exit.*

Amelia. I wish to plead for two young men—For one, that he may be let out of prison: for the other, that he may be made a prisoner for life. [*Looks out.*] The tower is still locked. How dismal it must be to be shut up in such a place! and perhaps—[*Calls.*] Butler! Butler! come this way. I wish to speak to you. This young soldier has risked his life for his mother, and that accounts for the interest I take in his misfortunes.

Enter the BUTLER.

Pray, have you carried any thing to the prisoner to eat?

Butler. Yes.

Amelia. What was it?

Butler. Some fine black bread; and water as clear as crystal.

Amelia. Are you not ashamed! Even my father pities him. Go directly down to the kitchen, and desire the cook to give you something good and comfortable; and then go into the cellar for a bottle of wine.

Butler. Good and comfortable indeed!

Amelia. And carry both to the tower.

Butler. I am willing at any time, dear lady, to obey your orders; but, on this occasion, the prisoner's food must remain bread and water—It is the Baron's particular command.

Amelia. Ah! My father was in the height of passion, when he gave it.

Butler. Whatsoever his passion might be, it is the duty of a true and honest dependent to obey his lord's mandates. I will not suffer a servant in this house, nor will I, myself, give the young man any thing except bread and water—But I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll read my verses to him.

Amelia. Give me the key of the cellar—I'll go myself.

Butler. [*Gives the key.*] And there's my verses—[*Taking them from his pocket.*] carry them with you, they may comfort him as much as the wine. [*She throws them down.*] [*Exit* AMELIA.

Butler. [*In amazement.*] Not take them! Refuse to take them!—[*He lifts them from the floor with the utmost respect*]—

"*I must have made an elegy,*
And not this fine narration." [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Prison in one of the Towers of the Castle.

FREDERICK *alone.*

Fred. How a few moments destroy the happiness of a man! When I, this morning, set out from my

inn, and saw the sun rise, I sung with joy.—Flattered with the hope of seeing my mother, I formed a scheme how I would lovingly surprise her. But, farewell all pleasant prospects—I return to my native country, and the first object I behold, is my dying parent; my first lodging, a prison; and my next walk will perhaps be—oh, merciful Providence! have I deserved all this?

Enter AMELIA, *with a small basket covered with a napkin.—She speaks to some one without.*

Amelia. Wait there, Francis, I shall soon be back.

Fred. [*Hearing the door open, and turning round.*] Who's there?

Amelia. You must be both hungry and thirsty, fear.

Fred. Oh, no! neither.

Amelia. Here's a bottle of wine, and something to eat. [*Places the basket on the table.*] I have often heard my father say, that wine is quite a cordial to the heart.

Fred. A thousand thanks, dear stranger. Ah! could I prevail on you to have it sent to my mother, who is upon her death-bed, under the roof of an honest peasant, called Hubert! Take it hence, my kind benefactress, and save my mother.

Amelia. But first assure me, that you did not intend to murder my father.

Fred. Your father! Heaven forbid.—I meant but to preserve her life, who gave me mine.—Murder your father! No, no—I hope not.

Amelia. And I thought not—or, if you had murdered any one, you had better have killed the Count; nobody would have missed him.

Fred. Who, may I inquire, were those gentlemen, whom I hoped to frighten into charity?

Amelia. Ay, if you only intended to frighten them, the Count was the very person for your purpose. But

you caught hold of the other gentleman?—And could you hope to intimidate Baron Wildenhaim?

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim?—Almighty powers!

Amelia. What's the matter?

Fred. The man to whose breast I held my sword— [*Trembling.*

Amelia. Was Baron Wildenhaim—the owner of this estate—my father!

Fred. [*With the greatest emotion.*] My father!

Amelia. Good Heaven, how he looks! I am afraid he's mad. Here! Francis, Francis. [*Exit, calling.*

Fred. [*All agitation.*] My father! Eternal Judge! thou dost not slumber! The man, against whom I drew my sword this day, was my father! One moment longer, and provoked, I might have been the murderer of my father! [*Sinks down on a chair.*

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Welcome, sir! By your dress you are of the church, and consequently a messenger of comfort. You are most welcome, sir.

Anhalt. I wish to bring comfort, and avoid upbraidings; for your own conscience will reproach you more than the voice of a preacher. From the sensibility of your countenance, together with a language, and address superior to the vulgar, it appears, young man, you have had an education, which should have preserved you from a state like this.

Fred. My education I owe to my mother. Filial love, in return, has plunged me into the state you see. A civil magistrate will condemn according to the law—A priest, in judgment, is not to consider the act itself, but the impulse, which led to the act.

Anhalt. I shall judge with all the lenity my religion dictates: and you are the prisoner of a nobleman, who compassionates you for the affection which you bear towards your mother; for he has sent to the village where you directed him, and has found the

account you have relating to her true.—With this impression in your favour, it is my advice, that you endeavour to see and supplicate the Baron for your release from prison, and all the peril of his justice.

Fred. [*Starting.*] I—I see the Baron! I!—I supplicate for my deliverance.—Will you favour me with his name?—Is it not Baron——

Anhalt. Baron Wildenhaim.

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim! He lived formerly in Alsace?

Anhalt. The same.—About a year after the death of his wife, he left Alsace; and arrived here a few weeks ago to take possession of this his paternal estate.

Fred. So! his wife is dead;—and that generous young lady, who came to my prison just now, is his daughter?

Anhalt. Miss Wildenhaim, his daughter.

Fred. And that young gentleman, I saw with him this morning, is his son?

Anhalt. He has no son.

Fred. [*Hastily.*] Oh, yes, he has—[*Recollecting himself.*]—I mean him that was out shooting to-day.

Anhalt. He is not his son.

Fred. [*To himself.*] Thank Heaven!

Anhalt. He is only a visitor.

Fred. I thank you for this information; and if you will undertake to procure me a private interview with Baron Widenhaim——

Anhalt. Why private? However, I will venture to take you for a short time from this place, and introduce you; depending on your innocence, or your repentance—on his conviction in your favour, or his mercy towards your guilt. Follow me. [*Exit.*

Fred. [*Following.*] I have beheld an affectionate parent in deep adversity.—Why should I tremble thus?—Why doubt my fortitude, in the presence of an unnatural parent in prosperity? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter BARON WILDENHAIM *and* AMELIA.

Baron. I hope you judge more favourably of Count Cassel's understanding, since the private interview you have had with him. Confess to me the exact effect of the long conference between you.

Amelia. To make me hate him.

Baron. What has he done?

Amelia. Oh! told me of such barbarous deeds he has committed.

Baron. What deeds?

Amelia. Made vows of love to so many women, that, on his marriage with me, a hundred female hearts will at least be broken.

Baron. Psha! do you believe him?

Amelia. Suppose I do not; is it to his honour that I believe he tells a falsehood?

Baron. He is mistaken merely.

Amelia. Indeed, my lord, in one respect I am sure he speaks truth. For our old butler told my waiting-maid of a poor young creature who has been deceived, undone; and she, and her whole family, involved in shame and sorrow by his perfidy.

Baron. Are you sure the butler said this?

Amelia. See him, and ask him. He knows the whole story, indeed he does; the names of the persons, and every circumstance.

Baron. Desire he may be sent to me.

Amelia. [*Goes to the door and calls.*] Order old Verdun to come to the Baron directly.

Baron. I know tale-bearers are apt to be erroneous. I'll hear from himself the account you speak of.

Amelia. I believe it is in verse.

Baron. [*Angry.*] In verse!

Amelia. But, then, indeed it's true.

Enter BUTLER.

Amelia. Verdun, pray have you not some true poetry?

Butler. All my poetry is true—and so far, better than some people's prose.

Baron. But I want prose on this occasion, and command you to give me nothing else. [BUTLER *bows.*] Have you heard of an engagement which Count Cassel is under to any other woman than my daughter?

Butler. I am to tell your honour in prose?

Baron. Certainly. [BUTLER *appears uneasy and loath to speak.*] Amelia, he does not like to divulge what he knows in presence of a third person—leave the room. [*Exit* AMELIA.

Butler. No, no—that did not cause my reluctance to speak.

Baron. What then?

Butler. Your not allowing me to speak in verse—for here is the poetic poem. [*Holding up a paper.*

Baron. How dare you pretend to contend with my will? Tell me in plain language all you know on the subject I have named.

Butler. Well then, my lord, if you must have the account in quiet prose, thus it was—Phœbus, one morning, rose in the east, and having handed in the long-expected day, he called up his brother Hymen——

Baron. Have done with your rhapsody.

Butler. Ay; I knew you'd like it best in verse—

There liv'd a lady in this land,
Whose charms the heart made tingle;
At church she had not given her hand,
And therefore still was single.

Baron. Keep to prose.

Butler. I will, my lord; but I have repeated it so often in verse, I scarce know how.—Count Cassel, influenced by the designs of Cupid in his very worst humour,

> *" Count Cassel woo'd this maid so rare,*
> *And in her eye found grace;*
> *And if his purpose was not fair,"*

Baron. No verse.

Butler. *" It probably was base."*

I beg your pardon, my lord; but the verse will intrude, in spite of my efforts to forget it. 'Tis as difficult for me at times to forget, as 'tis for other men at times to remember. But in plain truth, my lord, the Count was treacherous, cruel, forsworn.

Baron. I am astonished!

Butler. And would be more so if you would listen to the whole poem. [*Most earnestly.*] Pray, my lord, listen to it,

Baron. You know the family? All the parties?

Butler. I will bring the father of the damsel to prove the veracity of my muse. His name is Baden —poor old man!

> *" The sire consents to bless the pair,*
> *And names the nuptial day,*
> *When, lo! the bridegroom was not there,*
> *Because he was away."*

Baron. But tell me—Had the father his daughter's innocence to deplore?

Butler. Ah! my lord, ah! and you *must* hear that part in rhyme. Loss of innocence never sounds well except in verse.

> *" For, ah! the very night before,*
> *No prudent guard upon her,*
> *The Count he gave her oaths a score,*
> *And took in change her honour.*

MORAL.

Then you, who now lead single lives,
From this sad tale beware;
And do not act as you were wives,
Before you really are."

Enter COUNT CASSEL.

Baron. [*To the* BUTLER.] Leave the room instantly.

Count. Yes, good Mr. family poet, leave the room, and take your doggerels with you.

Butler. Dont affront my poem, your honour; for I am indebted to you for the plot.

" The Count he gave her oaths a score,
And took in change her honour." [*Exit* BUTLER.

Baron. Count, you see me agitated.

Count. What can be the cause?

Baron. I'll not keep you in doubt a moment. You are accused, sir, of being engaged to another woman, while you offer marriage to my child.

Count. To only *one* other woman?

Baron. What do you mean?

Count. My meaning is, that when a man is young and rich, has travelled, and is no personal object of disapprobation,—to have made vows but to one woman is an absolute slight upon the rest of the sex.

Baron. Without evasion, sir, do you know the name of Baden? Was there ever a promise of marriage made by you to his daughter? Answer me plainly: or must I take a journey to inquire of the father?

Count. No—he can tell you no more than, I dare say, you already know; and which I shall not contradict.

Baron. Amazing insensibility! And can you hold your head erect, while you acknowledge perfidy?

Count. My dear Baron,—if every man, who deserves to have a charge such as this brought against him, was not permitted to look up—it is a doubt whom we might not meet crawling on all fours.

[*He accidentally taps the* BARON's *shoulder.*

Baron. [*Starts—recollects himself—then in a faultering voice.*] Yet—nevertheless—the act is so atrocious—

Count. But nothing new.

Baron. [*Faintly.*] Yes—I hope—I hope it is new.

Count. What, did you never meet with such a thing before?

Baron. [*Agitated.*] If I have—I pronounced the man, who so offended—a villain.

Count. You are singularly scrupulous. I question if the man thought himself so.

Baron. Yes he did.

Count. How do you know?

Baron. [*Hesitating.*] I have heard him say so.

Count. But he ate, drank, and slept, I suppose?

Baron. [*Confused.*] Perhaps he did.

Count. And was merry with his friends; and his friends as fond of him as ever?

Baron. Perhaps [*Confused.*]—perhaps they were.

Count. And perhaps he now and then took upon him to lecture young men for their gallantries?

Baron. Perhaps he did.

Count. Why, then, after all, Baron, your villain is a mighty good, prudent, honest fellow; and I have no objection to your giving me that name.

Baron. But do you not think of some atonement to the unfortunate girl?

Count. Did *your* villain atone?

Baron. No: when his reason was matured, he wished to make some recompense, but his endeavours were too late.

Count. I will follow his example, and wait till my

reason is matured, before I think myself competent to determine what to do.

Baron. And till that time I defer your marriage with my daughter.

Count. Would you delay her happiness so long? Why, my dear Baron, considering the fashionable life I lead, it may be these ten years before my judgment arrives to its necessary standard.

Baron. I have the head-ache, Count—These tidings have discomposed, disordered me—I beg your absence for a few minutes.

Count. I obey—And let me assure you, my lord, that, although, from the extreme delicacy of your honour, you have ever through life shuddered at seduction; yet, there are constitutions, and there are circumstances, in which it can be palliated.

Baron. Never. [*Violently.*

Count. Not in a grave, serious, reflecting man such as *you*, I grant. But in a gay, lively, inconsiderate, flimsy, frivolous coxcomb, such as myself, it is excusable: for me to keep my word to a woman, would be deceit: 'tis not expected of me. It is in my character to break oaths in love; as it is in your nature, my lord, never to have spoken any thing but wisdom and truth. [*Exit.*

Baron. Could I have thought a creature so insignificant as that, had power to excite sensations such as I feel at present! I am, indeed, worse than he is, as much as the crimes of a man exceed those of an idiot.

Enter AMELIA.

Amelia. I heard the Count leave you, my lord, and so I am come to inquire——

Baron. [*Sitting down, and trying to compose himself.*] You are not to marry Count Cassel—And now, mention his name to me no more.

Amelia. I won't—indeed I won't—for I hate his name.—But thank you, my dear father, for this good

news. [*Draws a chair, and sits on the opposite side of the table, on which he leans.—After a pause.*] And who am I to marry?

Baron. [*His head on his hand.*] I can't tell.

[AMELIA *appears to have something on her mind which she wishes to disclose.*

Amelia. I never liked the Count.

Baron. No more did I.

Amelia. [*After a pause.*] I think love comes just as it pleases, without being asked.

Baron. [*In deep thought.*] It does so.

Amelia. [*After another pause.*] And there are instances, where, perhaps, the object of love makes the passion meritorious.

Baron. To be sure there are.

Amelia. For example; my affection for Mr. Anhalt as my tutor.

Baron. Right.

Amelia. [*After another pause.*] I should like to marry. [*Sighing.*

Baron. So you shall. [*A pause.*] It is proper for every body to marry.

Amelia. Why, then, does not Mr. Anhalt marry?

Baron. You must ask him that question yourself.

Amelia. I have.

Baron. And what did he say?

Amelia. Will you give me leave to tell you what he said?

Baron. Certainly.

Amelia. And what I said to him?

Baron. Certainly.

Amelia. And won't you be angry?

Baron. Undoubtedly not.

Amelia. Why, then—you know you commanded me never to disguise or conceal the truth.

Baron. I did so.

Amelia. Why, then he said——

Baron. What did he say?

Amelia. He said—he would not marry me without your consent for the world.

Baron. [*Starting from his chair.*] And pray, how came this the subject of your conversation?

Amelia. [*Rising.*] I brought it up.

Baron. And what did you say?

Amelia. I said, that birth and fortune were such old-fashioned things to me, I cared nothing about either; and that I had once heard my father declare he should consult my happiness in marrying me, beyond any other consideration.

Baron. I will once more repeat to you my sentiments. It is the custom in this country for the children of nobility to marry only with their equals; but as my daughter's content is more dear to me than an ancient custom, I would bestow you on the first man I thought calculated to make you happy; by this I do not mean to say, that I should not be severely nice in the character of the man to whom I gave you; and Mr. Anhalt, from his obligations to me, and his high sense of honour, thinks too nobly——

Amelia. Would it not be noble to make the daughter of his benefactor happy?

Baron. But when that daughter is a child, and thinks like a child——

Amelia. No, indeed, papa, I begin to think very like a woman. Ask *him* if I don't.

Baron. Ask him! You feel gratitude for the instructions you have received from him, and you fancy it love.

Amelia. Are there two gratitudes?

Baron. What do you mean?

Amelia. Because I feel gratitude to you; but that is very unlike the gratitude I feel towards him.

Baron. Indeed!

Amelia. Yes; and then he feels another gratitude towards me. What's that?

Baron. Has he told you so?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron. That was not right of him.

Amelia. Oh! if you did but know how I surprised him!

Baron. Surprised him!

Amelia. He came to me by your command, to examine my heart respecting Count Cassel. I told him, that I would never marry the Count.

Baron. But him?

Amelia. Yes, him.

Baron. Very fine indeed! And what was his answer?

Amelia. He talked of my rank in life; of my aunts and cousins; of my grandfather, and great grandmother; of his duty to you; and endeavoured to persuade me to think no more of him.

Baron. He acted honestly.

Amelia. But not politely.

Baron. No matter.

Amelia. Dear father! I shall never be able to love another—Never be happy with any one else.

[*Throwing herself on her knees.*

Baron. Rise, I insist.

As she rises, enter ANHALT.

Anhalt. My lord, forgive me! I have ventured, on the privilege of my office, as a minister of holy charity, to bring the poor soldier, whom your justice has arrested, into the adjoining room; and I presume to entreat you will admit him to your presence, and hear his apology, or his supplication.

Baron. Anhalt, you have done wrong. I pity the unhappy boy; but you know I cannot, must not, forgive him,

Anhalt. I beseech you then, my lord, to tell him so yourself. From your lips he may receive his doom with resignation.

Amelia. Oh father! See him and take pity on him; his sorrows have made him frantic.

Baron. Leave the room, Amelia, I command you. [*On her attempting to speak, he raises his voice.*] Instantly.— [*Exit* AMELIA.

Anhalt. He asked a private audience: perhaps he has some confession to make that may relieve his mind, and may be requisite for you to hear.

Baron. Well, bring him in,—and do you wait in the adjoining room, till our conference is over. I must then, sir, have a conference with you.

Anhalt. I shall obey your commands. [*He goes to the door, and re-enters with* FREDERICK. ANHALT *then retires at the same door.*]

Baron. [*Haughtily to* FREDERICK.] I know, young man, you plead your mother's wants in excuse for an act of desperation: but powerful as this plea might be in palliation of a fault, it cannot extenuate a crime like yours.

Fred. I have a plea for my conduct even more powerful than a mother's wants.

Baron. What's that?

Fred. My father's cruelty.

Baron. You have a father then?

Fred. I have, and a rich one—Nay, one that's reputed virtuous, and honourable. A great man, possessing estates and patronage in abundance; much esteemed at court, and beloved by his tenants; kind, benevolent, honest, generous—

Baron. And with all those great qualities, abandons you?

Fred. He does, with all the qualities I mention.

Baron. Your father may do right; a dissipated, desperate youth, whom kindness cannot draw from vicious habits, severity may.

Fred. You are mistaken—My father does not discard me for my vices—He does not know me—has never seen me—He abandoned me, even before I was born.

Baron. What do you say?

Fred. The tears of my mother are all that I inherit from my father. Never has he protected or supported me—never protected her.

Baron. Why don't you apply to his relations?

Fred. They disown me, too—I am, they say, related to no one—All the world disclaim me, except my mother—and there again, I have to thank my father.

Baron. How so?

Fred. Because I am an illegitimate son.—My seduced mother has brought me up in patient misery. Industry enabled her to give me an education; but the days of my youth commenced with hardships, sorrow, and danger.—My companions lived happy around me, and had a pleasing prospect in their view, while bread and water only were my food, and no hopes joined to sweeten it. But my father felt not that!

Baron. [*To himself.*] He touches my heart.

Fred. After five years' absence from my mother, I returned this very day, and found her dying in the streets for want—Not even a hut to shelter her, or a pallet of straw—But my father feels not that! He lives in a palace, sleeps on the softest down, enjoys all the luxuries of the great; and, when he dies, a funeral sermon will praise his great benevolence, his christian charities.

Baron. [*Greatly agitated.*] What is your father's name?

Fred. —He took advantage of an innocent young woman, gained her affection by flattery and false promises; gave life to an unfortunate being,—who was on the point of murdering his father.

Baron. [*Shuddering.*] Who is he?

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim.

[*The* BARON'S *emotion expresses the sense of amazement, guilt, shame, and horror.*

Fred. In this house did you rob my mother of her honour; and in this house I am a sacrifice for the crime. I am your prisoner—I will not be free—I am a robber—I give myself up.—You shall deliver me into the hands of justice—You shall accompany me to the spot of public execution. You shall hear in vain the chaplain's consolation and injunctions. You shall find how I, in despair, will, to the last moment, call for retribution on my father.

Baron. Stop! Be pacified—

Fred. —And when you turn your head from my extended corse, you will behold my weeping mother. —Need I paint how her eyes will greet you?

Baron. Desist—barbarian, savage, stop!

Enter ANHALT, *alarmed.*

Anhalt. What do I hear? What is this?—Young man, I hope you have not made a second attempt?

Fred. Yes; I have done what it was your place to do. I have made a sinner tremble.

[*Points to the* BARON, *and exit.*

Anhalt. What can this mean?—I do not comprehend—

Baron. He is my son!—He is my son!—Go, Anhalt,—advise me—help me—Go to the poor woman, his mother—He can show you the way—make haste—speed to protect her——

Anhalt. But what am I to——

Baron. Go.—Your heart will tell you how to act.

[*Exit* ANHALT.

[BARON *distractedly.*] Who am I? What am I? Mad —raving—no—I have a son—A son! The bravest—I will—I must—oh! [*With tenderness.*] Why have I not embraced him yet? [*Increasing his voice.*] why not pressed him to my heart? Ah! see—[*Looking after him.*]—He flies from the castle—Who's there? Where are my attendants?

Enter two SERVANTS.

Follow him—bring the prisoner back.—But observe my command—treat him with respect—treat him as my son—and your master. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

Inside of the Cottage.

AGATHA, COTTAGER, *and his* WIFE, *discovered.*

Agatha. Pray look and see if he is coming.

Cot. It is of no use. I have been in the road; have looked up and down; but neither see nor hear any thing of him.

Wife. Have a little patience.

Agatha. I wish you would step out once more—I think he cannot be far off.

Cot. I will; I will go. [*Exit.*

Wife. If your son knew what Heaven had sent you, he would be here very soon.

Agatha. I feel so anxious——

Wife. But why? I should think a purse of gold, such as you have received, would make any body easy.

Agatha. Where can he be so long? He has been gone four hours. Some ill must have befallen him.

Wife. It is still broad day-light—don't think of any danger.—This evening we must all be merry. I'll prepare the supper. What a good gentleman our Baron must be! I am sorry I ever spoke a word against him.

Agatha. How did he know I was here?

Wife. Heaven only can tell. The servant that brought the money was very secret.

Agatha. [*To herself.*] I am astonished! I wonder! Oh! surely he has been informed—Why else should he have sent so much money?

Re-enter COTTAGER.

Agatha. Well!—not yet!

Cot. I might look till I am blind for him—but I saw our new Rector coming along the road; he calls in sometimes. May be, he will this evening,

Wife. He is a very good gentleman; pays great attention to his parishioners; and where he can assist the poor, he is always ready.

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. Good evening, friends.

Both. Thank you, reverend sir.

[*They both run to fetch a chair.*

Anhalt. I thank you, good people—I see you have a stranger here.

Cot. Yes, your reverence; it is a poor sick woman, whom I took in doors.

Anhalt. You will be rewarded for it. [*To* AGATHA.] May I beg leave to ask your name?

Agatha. Ah! If we were alone——

Anhalt. Good neighbours, will you leave us alone for a few minutes? I have something to say to this poor woman.

Cot. Wife, do you hear? Come along with me.

[*Exeunt* COTTAGER *and his* WIFE.

Anhalt. Now——

Agatha. Before I tell who I am, what I am, and what I was——I must beg to ask——Are you of this country?

Anhalt. No—I was born in Alsace.

Agatha. Did you know the late rector personally, whom you have succeeded?

Anhalt. No.

Agatha. Then you are not acquainted with my narrative?

Anhalt. Should I find you to be the person whom I have long been in search of, your history is not altogether unknown to me.

Agatha. "That you have been in search of!" Who gave you such a commission?

Anhalt. A man, who, if it so prove, is much concerned for your misfortunes.

Agatha. How? Oh, sir! tell me *quickly*—*Whom* do you think to find in me?

Anhalt. Agatha Friburg.

Agatha. Yes, I am that unfortunate woman; and the man, who pretends to take concern in my misfortunes, is——Baron Wildenhaim——he who betrayed me, abandoned me and my child, and killed my parents. He would now repair our sufferings with this purse of gold. [*Takes out the purse.*] Whatever may be your errand, sir, whether to humble, or to protect me, it is alike indifferent. I therefore request you to take this money to him, who sent it. Tell him, my honour has never been saleable. Tell him, destitute as I am, even indigence will not tempt me to accept charity from my seducer. He despised my heart —I despise his gold.—He has trampled on me.—I trample on his representative.

[*Throws the purse on the ground.*

Anhalt. Be patient—I give you my word, that when the Baron sent this present to an unfortunate woman, for whom her son had supplicated, he did not know that woman was Agatha.

Agatha. My son? what of my son!

Anhalt. Do not be alarmed—The Baron met with an affectionate son, who begged for his sick mother, and it affected him.

Agatha. Begged of the Baron! of his father!

Anhalt. Yes; but they did not know each other; and the mother received the present on the son's account.

Agatha. Did not know each other? Where is my son?

Anhalt. At the castle.

Agatha. And still unknown?

Anhalt. Now he is known—an explanation has taken place; and I am sent here by the Baron, not to a stranger, but to Agatha Friburg—not with gold! his commission was——"do what your heart directs you."

Agatha. How is my Frederick? How did the Baron receive him?

Anhalt. I left him just in the moment the discovery was made. By this time your son is, perhaps, in the arms of his father.

Agatha. Oh! is it possible, that a man, who has been near eighteen years deaf to the voice of nature should change so suddenly?

Anhalt. I do not mean to justify the Baron, But—he has loved you—and fear of his noble kindred alone caused his breach of faith to you.

Agatha. But to desert me wholly, and wed another—

Anhalt. War called him away—Wounded in the field, he was taken to the adjacent seat of a nobleman, whose only daughter by anxious attention to his recovery, won his gratitude; and, influenced by the advice of his worldly friends, he married. But no sooner was I received into the family, and admitted to his confidence, than he related to me your story; and at times would exclaim in anguish—"The proud imperious Baroness avenges the wrongs of my deserted Agatha." Again, when he presented me this living, and I left France to take possession of it, his last words, before we parted, were—"The moment

you arrive at Wildenhaim, make all inquiries to find out my poor Agatha." Every letter I afterwards received from him contained "Still, still, no tidings of my Agatha." And fate ordained it should be so till this fortunate day.

Agatha. What you have said has made my heart overflow—where will this end?

Anhalt. I know not yet the Baron's intentions: but your sufferings demand immediate remedy; and one way only is left—Come with me to the castle. Do not start—you shall be concaled in my apartments, till you are called for.

Agatha. I go to the Baron's;—No.

Anhalt. Go for the sake of your son—reflect, that his fortunes may depend upon your presence.

Agatha. And he is the only branch on which my hope still blossoms: the rest are withered.—I will forget my wrongs as a woman, if the Baron will atone to the mother—he shall have the woman's pardon, if he will merit the mother's thanks—[*After a struggle.*]—I *will* go to the castle—for the sake of my Frederick, go even to his father. But where are my good host and hostess, that I may take leave, and thank them for their kindness?

Anhalt. [*Taking up the purse which* AGATHA *had thrown down.*] Here, good friend! Good woman!

Enter the COTTAGER *and his* WIFE.

Wife. Yes, yes, here am I.

Anhalt. Good people, I will take your guest with me. You have acted an honest part, and therefore receive this reward for your trouble. [*He offers the purse to the* COTTAGER, *who puts it by, and turns away.*]

Anhalt. [*To the* WIFE.] Do *you* take it.

Wife. I always obey my pastor. [*Taking it.*]

Agatha. Good bye. [*Shaking hands with the* COT-

TAGERS.] For your hospitality to me, may ye enjoy continued happiness!

Cot. Fare you well—fare you well.

Wife. If you find friends and get health, we won't trouble you to call on us again: but if you should fall sick or be in poverty, we shall take it very unkind if we don't see you.

[*Exeunt* AGATHA *and* ANHALT *on one side,* COTTAGER *and his* WIFE *on the other.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

BARON *sitting upon a sofa.*—FREDERICK *standing near him, with one hand pressed between his*—*the* BARON *rises.*

Baron. Been in battle too!—I am glad to hear it. You have known hard services, but now they are over, and joy and happiness will succeed.—The reproach of your birth shall be removed, for I will acknowledge you my son, and heir to my estate.

Fred. And my mother——

Baron. She shall live in peace and affluence. Do you think I would leave your mother unprovided, unprotected? No! About a mile from this castle I have an estate called Weldendorf—there she shall live, and call her own whatever it produces. There she shall reign, and be sole mistress of the little paradise. There her past sufferings shall be changed to peace and tranquillity. On a summer's morning, we, my son, will ride to visit her; pass a day, a week with her; and in this social intercourse time will glide pleasantly.

Fred. And, pray, my lord, under what name is my mother to live then?

Baron. [*Confused.*] How?

Fred. In what capacity?—As your domestic—or as——

Baron. That we will settle afterwards.

Fred. Will you allow me, sir, to leave the room a little while, that you may have leisure to consider *now?*

Baron. I do not know how to explain myself in respect to your mother, more than I have done already.

Fred. My fate, whatever it may be, shall never part me from her's. My lord, it must be Frederick of Wildenhaim, and Agatha of Wildenhaim—or Agatha Friburg, and Frederick Friburg. This is my firm resolution, upon which I call Heaven to witness.

[*Exit.*

Baron. Young man! Frederick!—[*Calling after him.*] Hasty indeed! would make conditions with his father. No, no, that must not be. I just now thought how well I had arranged my plans—had relieved my heart of every burden, when, a second time, he throws a mountain upon it. Stop, friend conscience, why do you take his part?—For near twenty years thus you have used me, and been my torture.

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Ah! Anhalt, I am glad you are come. My conscience and myself are at variance.

Anhalt. Your conscience is in the right.

Baron. You don't know yet what the quarrel is.

Anhalt. Conscience is always right—because it never speaks unless it *is* so.

Baron. Ay, a man of your order can more easily attend to its whispers, than an old warrior. The sound of cannon has made him hard of hearing.—I have found my son again, Mr. Anhalt, a fine, brave young man—I mean to make him my heir—Am I in the right?

Anhalt. Perfectly.

Baron. And his mother shall live in happiness—My estate, Weldendorf, shall be her's—I'll give it to her, and she shall make it her residence. Don't I do right?

Anhalt. No.

Baron. [*Surprised.*] No? And what else should I do?

Anhalt. [*Forcibly.*] Marry her.

Baron. [*Starting.*] I marry her!

Anhalt. Baron Wildenhaim is a man, who will not act inconsistently—As this is my opinion, I expect your reasons, if you do not.

Baron. Would you have me marry a beggar?

Anhalt. [*After a pause.*] Is that your only objection?

Baron. [*Confused.*] I have more—many more.

Anhalt. May I entreat to know them likewise?

Baron. My birth!

Anhalt. Go on.

Baron. My relations would despise me.

Anhalt. Go on.

Baron. [*In anger.*] 'Sdeath! are not these reasons enough?—I know no other.

Anhalt. Now, then, it is my turn to state mine for the advice I have given you. But first I presume to ask a few questions.—Did Agatha, through artful insinuation, gain your affection? or did she give you cause to suppose her inconstant?

Baron. Neither—but for me, she had been always virtuous and good.

Anhalt. Did it cost you trouble and earnest entreaty to make her otherwise?

Baron. [*Angrily.*] Yes.

Anhalt. You pledged your honour?

Baron. [*Confused.*] Yes.

Anhalt. Called God to witness?

Baron. [*More confused.*] Yes.

Anhalt. The witness you called at that time was the Being, who sees you now. What you gave in

pledge was your honour, which you must redeem. Therefore, thank Heaven that it is in your power to redeem it. By marrying Agatha the ransom's paid: and she brings a dower greater than any princess can bestow—peace to your conscience. If you then esteem the value of this portion, you will not hesitate a moment to exclaim,—Friends, wish me joy, I will marry Agatha.

[BARON, *in great agitation, walks backwards and forwards, then takes* ANHALT *by the hand.*

Baron. " Friend, wish me joy—I will marry Agatha."

Anhalt. I do wish you joy.

Baron. Where is she?

Anhalt. In the castle—In my apartments here—I conducted her through the garden, to avoid curiosity.

Baron. Well, then, this is the wedding-day. This very evening you shall give us your blessing.

Anhalt. Not so soon, not so private. The whole village was witness of Agatha's shame—the whole village must be witness of Agatha's re-established honour. Do you consent to this?

Baron. I do.

Anhalt. Now the quarrel is decided. Now is your conscience quiet?

Baron. As quiet as an infant's. I only wish the first interview was over.

Anhalt. Compose yourself. Agatha's heart is to be your judge.

Enter AMELIA.

Baron. Amelia, you have a brother.

Amelia. I have just heard so, my lord; and rejoice to find the news confirmed by you.

Baron. I know, my dear Amelia, I can repay you for the loss of Count Cassel; but what return can I make to you for the loss of half your fortune?

Amelia. My brother's love will be ample recompense.

Baron. I will reward you better. Mr. Anhalt, the battle I have just fought, I owe to myself: the victory, I gained, I owe to you. A man of your principles, at once a teacher and an example of virtue, exalts his rank in life to a level with the noblest family—and I shall be proud to receive you as my son.

Anhalt. [*Falling on his knees, and taking the* BARON'S *hand.*] My lord, you overwhelm me with confusion, as well as with joy.

Baron. My obligations to you are infinite—Amelia shall pay the debt. [*Gives her to him.*

Amelia. Oh, my dear father! [*Embracing the* BARON.] what blessings you have bestowed on me in one day. [*To* ANHALT.] I will be your scholar still, and use more diligence than ever to please my master.

Anhalt. His present happiness admits of no addition.

Baron. Nor does mine—And there is yet another task to perform that will require more fortitude, more courage, than this has done! A trial that—[*Bursts into tears.*]—I cannot prevent them—Let me—let me—A few minutes will bring me to myself—Where is Agatha?

Anhalt. I will go, and fetch her.

[*Exit* ANHALT *at an upper entrance.*

Baron. Stop! Let me first recover a little. [*Walks up and down, sighing bitterly—looks at the door through which* ANHALT *left the room.*] That door she will come from—That was once the dressing-room of my mother—From that door I have seen her come many times—have been delighted with her lovely smiles—How shall I now behold her altered looks! Frederick must be my mediator.—Where is he?—Where is my son?—Now I am ready—my heart is prepared to receive her—Haste! haste! Bring her in.

He looks stedfastly at the door—ANHALT *leads in* AGATHA—*The* BARON *runs and clasps her in his arms*—*Supported by him, she sinks on a chair which* AMELIA *places in the middle of the stage*—*The* BARON *kneels by her side, holding her hand.*

Baron. Agatha, Agatha, do you know this voice?
Agatha. Wildenhaim.
Baron. Can you forgive me?
Agatha. Forgive you! [*Embracing him.*

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. [*As he enters.*] I hear the voice of my mother!—Ha! Mother! Father!

[FREDERICK *throws himself on his knees by the other side of his mother*—*She clasps him in her arms.*—AMELIA *is placed by the side of her father attentively viewing* AGATHA.—ANHALT *stands on the side of* FREDERICK *with his hands gratefully raised to Heaven.*—*The curtain slowly drops.*

THE END

LIBRARY
BOMBAY
BRANCH
ASIATIC SOCIETY


TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY
AMOS. DEAR MASTER, RAISE YOUR HEAD
AND SPEAK TO YOUR BLACK.
ACT. III. SCENE.
PAINTED BY SINGLETON
PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN & CO
ENGRAVED BY C. NOBLE

TO MARRY, OR NOT TO MARRY;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS,

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,
LONDON.

REMARKS.

It appears as if the writer of this play had said, previous to the commencement of the task, "I will shun the faults imputed by the critics to modern dramatists; I will avoid farcical incidents, broad jests, the introduction of broken English, whether Hibernian or provincial; songs, processions, and whatever may be considered by my judges as a repetition of those faults of which they have so frequently complained."

Vain is the forecast of both man and woman!—Supposing all those evils escaped which the authoress dreaded, what is the event of her cautious plan?—Has she produced a good comedy?—No. She has passed from one extreme to another; and, attempting to soar above others, has fallen even beneath herself.

In the dearth of wit, an audience will gladly accept of humour: but the author who shall dare to exclude from his comedy the last, without being able to furnish the first, assuredly must incur the rigorous, though just sentence, of dulness.

There is a degree of interest in the fable of "To Marry, or not to Marry," which protected it on the stage, and may recommend it to the reader. The

characters of Sir Oswin, Mrs. Sarah Mortland, Hester, and her father, are all justly drawn, but not with sufficient force for high dramatic effect. Their serious tendency wants relief from characters of more risible import, or from more comic materials contained in themselves. They are elegant and natural, but not powerful in any of their diversified attempts upon the heart.

Simplicity, the first design in the composition of this play, is perhaps, for the accomplishment of theatrical success, the most difficult of all attainments.

The stage delights the eye far oftener than the ear. Various personages of the drama, however disunited, amuse the looker on; whilst one little compact family presents a sameness to the view, like unity of place; and wearies the sight of a British auditor fully as much.

Incidents, too, must be numerous, however unconnected, to please a London audience: they seem, of late, to expect a certain number, whether good or bad. Quality they are judges of—but quantity they *must have.*

Still, perhaps, there wants but the pen of genius to give to a play of simple construction, all those attractive powers—which every complex drama is sure to possess.

The following remarkable observation extracted from a critique, on "To Marry, or not to Marry," in a popular Review, is worthy of insertion.

"It is singular that the authoress should, without

any foresight, have dramatised the situation of Lord Melville and Mr. Whitbread; yet this she has done: or, at least, circumstances which directly bear on the political relation in which the latter gentleman stands with the former."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD DANBERRY	*Mr. Munden.*
SIR OSWIN MORTLAND	*Mr. Kemble.*
MR. WILLOWEAR	*Mr. Farley.*
MR. LAVENSFORTH	*Mr. Cooke.*
AMOS	*Mr. Brunton.*
SIR OSWIN'S SERVANTS	*Mr. Field.* *Mr. Jeffries.* *Mr. L. Bologna.* *Mr. Lewiss.*
LORD DANBERRY'S SERVANT	*Mr. Ratchford.*
LADY SUSAN COURTLY	*Mrs. Glover.*
MRS. SARAH MORTLAND	*Mrs. Davenport.*
HESTER	*Miss Shuttleworth.*

TO MARRY, OR NOT TO MARRY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Hall at the Country Seat of SIR OSWIN MORTLAND.

A loud Knocking at the Gate.

Enter MRS. SARAH MORTLAND, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Mrs. M. Tell the coachman I shan't want the carriage this morning.—And observe, if my brother should ask for me, I am gone to take a walk in the beech grove.

Serv. Yes, ma'am. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter another SERVANT.

Serv. Ma'am, there's a young lady in a post chaise just stopt at the gate, and says she must see you.

Mrs. M. A young lady!—Must see me!—Who is she?—What is her name?

Serv. I asked her name, ma'am, but she refused to tell it.

Mrs. M. Refused to send me her name!—Then pray, inform her that I am not at home—tell her I'm busy—I will be seen by no one.

Serv. I told her, ma'am, that you were busy, and that you had company, and that you were not at home; but she says she has come post more than twenty miles on purpose to pay you a visit, and cannot return without seeing you.

Mrs. M. What an impertinent!—Come post!—show her in—how extremely ridiculous and ill bred!

Serv. Here she is, ma'am. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter HESTER, *in great agitation.*

Mrs. M. My dear Miss——! It is Miss ——, the young lady I met at Beverley—is it not?—What in the name of wonder——

Hester. Oh, Mrs. Sarah Mortland!—Oh, madam, pity and forgive me!—forgive this intrusion, and pity the cause of it.

Mrs. M. My dear, I must forgive all you do. [*Dissatisfiedly.*

Hester. I thought so, madam—I hoped you would forgive me, when I resolved to take this liberty. The kindness, the partiality you showed towards me, the very first time I was in your company——

Mrs. M. And which was the last, I believe, my dear; for I think I never saw you but once in my life.

Hester. No, madam; at Mrs. Brian's ball, when you were there at Beverley races. But that once you praised my dancing, my singing, my conversation!—You said, if you remember, that you wished you had just such a young companion as I was; you told me you should be glad to see me at any time—and so I am come.

Mrs. M. [*Disconcerted.*] Well!—and I *am* glad, very glad to see you.—I don't say I'm not.—Only a little surprised, my dear, that you did not wait for a more formal invitation.

Hester. What it wanted in form, you made up with earnestness.

Mrs. M. And I then, at that time, felt all the ardour I expressed. But, my dear, are you come by yourself?

Hester. Did you wish me to bring any body else?

Mrs. M. No, no. [*Hastily.*

Hester. I thought you would not—so I flew to you all alone, in my distress. [*Weeps.*

Mrs. M. But what distress? And why are you in tears?—I hope you have not run away from your friends?

Hester. I have no friend but you.

Mrs. M. Hem! hem! [*Confounded.*] But, my dear, tell me what is all this about? And why [*Frightened, and angry.*] have I the pleasure of seeing you here?

Hester. You know that I am an orphan!

Mrs. M. Yes—that I was told—but I really forget your name.

Hester. My christian name is Hester—and when I am called by any other, it is that of my guardian, with whom I have lived from my infancy—Mr. Ashdale.

Mrs. M. Hester Ashdale.

Hester. For my guardian never speaks of my own family but with reproach; has seldom permitted me to ask him any questions concerning them; and, indeed, has ever treated me with cruelty! [*Weeping.*

Mrs. M. We all have our trials, and we ought all to submit to them.

Hester. But mayn't we run away from them?

Mrs. M. Not always. Pray, when did you leave your guardian's house?

Hester. This very morning.—This very morning I was to have been married!—and they are now all waiting for me at the church, or by this time gone home to a very uncomfortable dinner without me.

Mrs. M. Without the bride!—Was there ever—

Hester. But, if you knew the intended bridegroom, you would not wonder.—He is so odious to me, that

I had rather stay with you by half, and be your companion or servant.—I'll read—I'll sing—I'll work—I'll do every thing to please you.

Mrs. M. But, my dear, this house I cannot call my own.—It is, in fact, my brother's, Sir Oswin Mortland's.—As I live entirely in the country, he suffers me to pass for the mistress of it, but at present, he's down here himself; and though much younger than I am, yet he is so much richer and wiser than I am, that he commands me in every thing. Indeed, such is his temper, he will always be lord and master of every place into which he condescends to enter; and he hates intruders—strangers—strange ladies in particular.

Hester. Then why did you invite me to come?

Mrs. M. I invited you—but I did not fix the time.

Hester. No, madam—but I thought I might.

Mrs. M. Then, your indiscretion in quitting your guardian's house, and your intended, husband!—Why did you give your consent to marry?

Hester. I was in such fear of my guardian's anger, and his wife's peevishness—I had no sense, no skill, no argument to answer all they said to prevail on me! It was, beside, so ill bred to tell a gentleman that I could not love him—that I could not bear to live with him—that he was disagreeable to me!

Mrs. M. So, then, you consented without any apparent reluctance!

Hester. I am sure I *looked* reluctantly: but I was obliged to say yes, to all they asked of me.

Mrs. M. Then you should have kept your word.

Hester. Indeed and so I intended, till it came to the very last—then I planned my escape. Did you never resolve on a thing, and think you would do it whatever it cost you: then, just on the point when it was to be done, find your heart sink, and all your resolutions turn to nothing?

Mrs. M. It must have been some very shocking

husband they designed for you, to give you such an aversion"!

Hester. Oh, he was not so very bad neither!—I dare say you would have had no objection to marry him: but I always said to myself—" I think a wedding is so pleasant;—the bells ring so sweetly; the bride and the bridemaids look so nice; and every one so joyful —that I never will marry, unless I can be joyful too."

Mrs. M. But when you return to your guardians, what do you think they will say to you for this conduct?

Hester. I never mean to return, madam; and by the time I have lived a week or two here, perhaps you may never wish me to go back.

Mrs. M. " A week or two!"—" never go back!"—I must instantly acquaint Sir Oswin with this visit, and obtain his permission, before I can venture to say you shall stay here even an hour or two.

Hester. Then dear, dear Mrs. Sarah Mortland, as this Sir Oswin is a cross, illnatured man, don't say I ran away just as I was going to be married: it may make him think me to blame.

Mrs. M. Tell him *that!*—Not for the universe!—If I were, he would not merely turn *you* out of his house, but *me*, for suffering you to come into it.—Step into that room while I go to him.

Hester. Oh, madam! rash as I may seem in having ventured hither, my heart has beat with fear more than with hope. Pity me as a stranger, if not as an acquaintance, and reflect that on my reception here, depends all my future prospects. [*Exit* HESTER.

Mrs. M. I vow she has put me in such a fright!—What can I say to Sir Oswin? I *did* ask her to come and see me, to be sure; and it would be uncharitable to turn her out; and yet it was equally uncharitable to come on such a slight invitation.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Library.

SIR OSWIN MORTLAND *discovered reading.*

LORD DANBERRY *raps at the Door twice.*

Sir Os. Who's there?

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. Nephew! nephew!—*I* beg your pardon; I know you don't like to be interrupted in your studies.

Sir Os. Yet my friends generally break in upon me at those very times, my lord, and tell me.—"they know they are disobliging me,"—by way of apology.

Lord D. Well, but you will excuse *me*—you'll excuse *me*, I fear, sooner than my *errand*; for *that*, I know you'll be displeased with.

Sir Os. Another apology!

Lord D. Nephew, it does not signify, but I must ask you, again and again,—will you suffer my fine estate, and our old title, to go to a mere stranger? This, you know, must be the case, if you resolve to continue a bachelor.—The thought of it embitters my life. Consider, Sir Oswin, marriage, as I have often told you, is a duty every man in your situation owes to his family, to society, to——

Sir Os. Well, well, I grant it; my dear uncle; and as my temper cannot bear continual irritation, I shall comply with your request, to get rid of it for ever.—I *will marry*, to put an end to all your anxieties, though I had rather—— [*With vehemence.*

Lord D. Thank you, my dear nephew, for this hearty promise: you have made me happy.

Sir Os. And myself miserable. I never thought of becoming a husband. I never intended to be a husband. Marriage will interfere with my pursuits, my studies, my——

Lord D. [*Soothingly.*] You will like the marriage state better than you expect.

Sir Os. Why, my lord, I shall at least meet with no disappointments in it. For I do, with certainty, expect that it will progressively destroy every comfort of my life; and I shall fortify myself against their total extinction.

Lord D. I own the prospect for a married man is not very bright just at this precise period. But, without dwelling on your character as a husband, consider the happiness you may enjoy as a parent. Reflect upon a son and heir!

Sir Os. I can feel no happiness in contemplating what does not exist.

Lord D. But I can. I can experience the highest gratification in foreseeing that now a son of yours will inherit my title and estates when I am laid low: for, by the course of years, I have but a short time to live.

Sir Os. So my marriage, which will inevitably rob me of every enjoyment I possess, is to accommodate two nonentities; one of whom will be gone out of the world, and the other not come into it!

Lord D. Still, there is a being in full existence, in the bloom of life, to whom your marriage will give high delight. *The lady*, with whom I mean you to marry—Lady Susan Courtly.

Sir Os. Lady Susan Courtly!

Lord D. Yes;—and, who, I believe, is as much in love with you——

[SIR OSWIN *goes to him, and looks him stedfastly in the Face.*

Sir Os. My lord—I am between thirty and forty years of age. I have lived in the world, at least half those years, an observer.

Lord D. I know you have.

Sir Os. And do you talk to me of being in love?

Lord D. Not you, but the lady. The lady, I say, is in love. Lady Susan.

[SIR OSWIN *turns away.*

Sir Os. Psha! psha! psha!

Lord D. She fancies she is.

Sir Os. But she won't make me fancy she is.

Lord D. I know you don't believe there is such a thing, as what is usually meant by the word *love.* But don't you think there may be such a thing as a good wife?

Sir Os. [*After Consideration.*] Yes, 'faith, I think there may. I think, possibly, there may.

Lord D. And why shou'dn't such a one fall to your share?

Sir Os. O, my lord,—It would be unconscionable in me to expect it. I can't hope to monopolize rarity.

Lord D. Ay, you are jocose; you may make free with your old uncle. [SIR OSWIN *takes his Hand kindly, as if apologizing.*] And now I'll tell you how your old uncle has made free with you. I have brought down Lady Susan Courtly to *my* house, here *in* the country—on this very spot—in the firm *persuasion* that you are smitten with *her charms: but that you* are too grave, too reserved, too consequential, think too much of your *own importance* and perfections, to ask a favour, even of a lady.

Sir Os. Why, my lord!——

Lord D. So, to save your dignity from the humiliation of sighing and kneeling, I have, in your name, solicited her hand in marriage.

Sir Os. My lord, I should be very sorry you appeared ridiculous in this affair.

Lord D. I knew you would—you always were careful of my reputation, and therefore I knew you would acknowledge, as yours, every syllable I have said in your name.

Sir Os. [*Walking about in agitation.*] Here's the beginning of matrimony! Always false foundations!

Lord D. But tell me: Don't you like Lady Susan, now, as well as you like any other woman?

Sir Os. Quite as well—she is the same to me as her whole sex. I have no partiality to any one, nor dislike to any one, except as a wife.

Lord D. Human foresight is truly exemplified in me! My pride has been to make you a learned man, a man of erudition. And what is my reward? You love nothing but books.

Sir Os. Yes, my lord, I love the whole human race —and I love my books, because they have taught me to do so.

Lord D. Can you boldly repeat that you love all mankind? There is one man whom I am sure you exclude from the rest.

Sir Os. You mean the state delinquent, Lavensforth —a man who has attempted my life?

Lord D. Not directly.

Sir Os. Pardon me, my lord;—his challenge was a direct attempt: and though the laws interfered, and disappointed that hope of his revenge; yet I have reason to believe he did not give up his designs against me, even when he left the kingdom.

Lord D. That is now full thirteen years ago; and if he be still living——

Sir Os. He is rancorous still: his rage was of no transient nature.—Yes, I own I do not love the man, who can bear malice for an act of justice; or could impute to my clear motives in his impeachment, any other end than the public good.

Lord D. But the public took such interest in the

cause,—Your triumph was so popular, and his defeat so——

Sir Os. Ay, that defeat, as well as his consequent punishment, may have been too severe; for though his sentence reached only to a fine, yet ultimately it proved so heavy, that, in effect, it caused his exile.

Lord D. So much the better.

Sir Os. And, after all—though *one* may be ruined, and *another* raised to fame, by rigorous prosecution of the faults of office; yet, in the candid estimate of man's imperfections and man's virtues, the accuser is seldom entirely right, nor the accused totally wrong.

Lord D. Why, I never heard you talk thus before—nor would I have the world hear you now. You did not speak thus on Lavensforth's impeachment.

Sir Os. No!—Youthful ardour made me then pronounce with decision. Years of studious application, and more matured experience, have lessened my confidence in my own opinions.

Lord D. Ay, you are in an ill humour now, and so you'll contradict every thing I assert. I am glad, however, to hear you speak so diffidently of *your* own judgment, for then you can the better rely on *mine*, and keep the promise you have made *me*.

Sir Os. Yes—my lord—as I have said, I'll marry in obedience to your will—I'll keep my word.

Lord D. [*Taking hold of him kindly.*] But now when? When will you fix the happy day? When will you marry? [SIR OSWIN *considers.*] Why, as you have no great inclination for the business, don't delay—marry soon—as you don't like it, get it over at once.

Sir Os. "Get it over?" Why, it's to last for life.

Lord D. Not always. There is such a thing as benefit of survivorship.

[MRS. SARAH MORTLAND *raps at the Library Door.*

Sir Os. Come in.

Lord D. Then I'll go. And I'll go out at this door, that I mayn't meet your company. [*Going, returns.*] And much obliged to you, my dear nephew, I am for all you have promised——I'm sure Lady Susan will be—— [*Rapping again at the Library Door.*

Sir Os. Come in. [*Calling very loud.*

[*Exit* LORD DANBERRY.

Enter MRS. SARAH MORTLAND.

Mrs. M. To tell you the truth, I am half afraid to come in.

Sir Os. Because I have told you a thousand times, you may command any part of my day but this.

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. I beg pardon,—I'll tell her you'll call on her to-day, or to-morrow morning. [*Exit.*

Sir Os. [*Impatiently.*] My lord!—You need not be afraid, however, sister; for, at present, your intrusion is not unwelcome. [*Sits down.*

Mrs. M. Nay, I am not so much alarmed at my intrusion, as at my errand: for I am come to tell you something you won't like.

Sir Os. More things I don't like, and more apologies! Why, then [*Very cross.*] you have chosen a bad time for your bad news, for I am in a very ill temper.

Mrs. M. The reason I came now was—that you might not be more offended at dinner time, by meeting a stranger at table. It is hard I can't make you love strangers!

Sir Os. Why won't you be content with my loving you?—Why won't you be contented with my loving all my old, troublesome, tiresome friends? If I loved the company of every idle stranger, ten to one I could not endure yours.

Mrs. M. That I would pardon, could I once see you

enjoy society like other people. But, I believe, I shall soon begin to think you have taken two of the monastic vows; that of seclusion, and the other against marriage.

Sir Os. In the latter, I shall at least, boast of your example.

Mrs. M. You are mistaken—I never made a vow against marriage. It was the men, I believe, who vowed never to ask me the question. Let me tell you, brother, there is a great deal of difference in sentiment, between a single man of a certain age, and a single woman of a certain age. The one does not marry, because he *won't*:—the other, because she *can't*.——But we'll not talk of these things now.—— [*Approaching him with Insinuation.*] It's only a pretty girl is to dine with us to-day.

Sir Os. [*Rising, in Anger.*] What have I to do with pretty girls?

Mrs. M. I said so,—I thought so;—I knew *you* would not like of her coming.

Sir Os. Then why did you invite her?

Mrs. M. I only invited her in the usual *complimentary* way; told her I should be glad to see her at any time; begged she would make *this* house her home, if she came into this part of the world. She lived twenty miles off, and I never imagined——

Sir Os. Oh, that every ostentatious invitation was just so received!

Mrs. M. I own that I did wrong; and therefore have taken her in for a few days.

Sir Os. "A few days!"—For yourself, you are justly repaid: for me, I will have no annoyance from your visitors. I shall set off for London to-morrow morning.

Mrs. M. Nay, nay—why, she won't be in your way—You will never see her, but at breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Sir Os. So,—she's only to torment me from morning till night.

Mrs. M. —One of the most beautiful young women!

Sir Os. What's her beauty to me?

Mrs. M. An orphan—without parents to protect her—without a single relation, that she knows, on earth—[*He pays Attention.*] Has been so cruelly used! ——You won't go to town, will you?

Sir Os. I don't know.

Mrs. M. —If you had seen how the poor creature wept when she arrived, and hung on me for pity!—— You'll dine with us to-day?

Sir Os. [*Sitting down.*] Perhaps I may.

Mrs. M. —And you'll behave civilly to this poor girl? I'll tell you who she is.

Sir Os. No, no; I don't want to know who she is.

Mrs. M. —Her distress is so great!

Sir Os. Why, then I don't care who she is.

[*He begins writing.*

[*Pause between them.*]

Mrs. M. Well, brother, now, I suppose, I have your leave to go?

Sir Os. How can you doubt it?

[*Exit* MRS. MORTLAND.—*The Scene closes on* SIR OSWIN *writing.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Library.

SIR OSWIN *discovered writing still.*

Willowear. [*Without.*] I tell you, I'm sure he *will* see me. Tell him, I come on very particular business.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Willowear.

Sir Os. Mr. Willowear, my old acquaintance and school-fellow!—Show him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.] I thought he was too fond of London, ever to come such a distance from it. [*Rises.*] What can be his particular business with me?

Enter WILLOWEAR.

Wil. Sir Oswin, I have taken this liberty——

Sir Os. Mr. Willowear, you tremble!—What causes this agitation?

Wil. The cause is, I am in a passion—and I can hardly tell my story for anger.

Sir Os. You are not angry with me, I hope?

Wil. No; Heaven forbid—But you will excuse me, if I say, I am offended with some part of your family.

Sir Os. Show me in what any of them have use

you ill, and you shall have instant redress. Pray sit down. [*They sit.*

Wil. I am sorry to name a lady of your family—a lady, whom I have not the honour of knowing—your sister.

Sir Os. My sister!

Wil. Yes; and another lady has used me worse, and has flown to her for protection.

Sir Os. I have just been quarrelling with my sister, for taking a young woman into the house. Does she belong to you?

Wil. She was within.——To tell you the whole story, Sir Oswin: the other day I fell in love.

Sir Os. Ha! ha! ha!

Wil. A beautiful girl!—You might have done the same thing.

Sir Os. No, no;—Ha! ha! ha! I beg your pardon. Proceed with your story—Ha! ha! ha! you know I was never in love.

Wil. But can you pretend to say, you never shall!

Sir Os. [*Looking stedfastly at him.*] Yes, I can.—But proceed.

Wil. A little, friendless girl! hardly any body knew who! brought up by the apothecary of our village. She caught my eye—her simple manners won my heart. I admire simplicity, of all female qualities.

Sir Os. So do I.

Wil. I grew tired of leading a bachelor's life. I had seen you, Sir Oswin, for instance, often out of temper—crabbed and rugged. No other fault, you know, ever laid to your charge, than being a little sullen, morose, and rather imperious. But all this, the women said, was merely for want of a wife.

Sir Os. "The women said!"—My dear sir, pray go on with your story. Does this young lady, in my house, belong to you?

Wil. Yes—no—she was very near it, though—I

won't say how *very, very near* it; for then you'll laugh again, and with some reason.

Sir Os. What! I suppose the ring bought.

Wil. The book opened—when she took it in her head to run away.

Sir Os. [*Rises.*] Monstrous! abominable! not to be borne! She has imposed on my sister with some piteous tale.—But she sha'n't remain here a moment longer.

Wil. I thought you would not suffer it.

Sir Os. Certainly not. [*Rings the Bell.*

Wil. How she contrived to have every thing ready to make her escape, no one can guess. But, instead of meeting me in the church, where I was waiting with a few friends, impatient for her coming, she slipped from her bridemaids into a postchaise, and drove to your house, where I have traced her.

Sir Os. Who's there?

Enter SERVANT.

Tell my sister I desire to see her, and the lady (the young woman who came hither this morning) in the parlour by the saloon immediately. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Depend upon it, she shall leave this house instantly, or give me the very best reasons why she should not.

Wil. She can give you none—after encouraging my addresses, accepting my presents—for I gave her trinkets in abundance, and a diamond ring of great value,—In a word, I *myself*, am *the only gift* she ever refused.

Sir Os. And, does she expect a refuge under my roof, thus charged with robbery?

Wil. The goods are upon her, I dare say. But, after all, I would rather have *her* back, than my property. She is more precious to me than my diamond.

Sir Os. "Precious! Have her back!" Wish to have such a woman for a wife!

Wil. Very true—I am wrong, I own—but, love! love!—Notwithstanding your sneer, Sir Oswin, love is every thing.

Sir Os. No, 'tis nothing—a whim—a fancy, conceived by the infirmity of youth, or of age. At seventeen or seventy, the infatuation is excusable; but, at your time of life, and mine, oh! it sinks the man into the boy, or dotard. But, come, I'll show you to my plantations, where you may amuse yourself, while I talk to these women; and, depend on my settling this business with as much care and concern for your welfare, as if I had your faith in the omnipotence of love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Parlour.

Enter MRS. SARAH MORTLAND *and* HESTER.

Mrs. M. Come, come—don't tremble thus—don't cry thus—don't be thus alarmed.

Hester. Is not Sir Oswin coming to talk to me? perhaps to put himself in a passion—to turn me out of the only place I have to shelter me.

Mrs. M. He has merely sent word, he wishes to speak to us; and will most likely be as angry with me as with you.

Hester. You are accustomed to his sternness.

Mrs. M. Stern as he is, he has the best of hearts to those who deserve his kindness.

Hester. But I know myself undeserving.

Mrs. M. And you? disappointed lover, who has certainly come to Sir Oswin on your account, has, no doubt, painted your conduct in the very worst colours.

Hester. Dear madam, let me run away again;—

suffer me to go before Sir Oswin comes, and save me the disgrace of being turned out.

Mrs. M. No; I should be turned out myself, if I were to connive at your escape. There is one circumstance, however, relative to you, that I do wish concealed from my brother, because it increases the peril of your situation.

Hester. Dear madam, what is it?

Mrs. M. Your guardian has sent me a letter by this Mr. Willowear, in which he informs me, that your real name is Lavensforth, and that you are the daughter, the only child, of Sir Oswin's inveterate enemy. By this intelligence, your guardian conceives you will be immediately restored to him, as my brother, under such circumstances, would not suffer you to remain a moment longer here.

Hester. Yes, madam, I am the child of an unfortunate man, whom I never heard mentioned without reproach. I knew he had many enemies, *and for* that reason I was denied my right to be called *by his* name: but I did not know that Sir Oswin was his particular foe.

Mrs. M. Yes; and though, possibly, both of them good men, peculiar occurrences, in the earlier part of their lives, when Sir Oswin was very young indeed, made them the bitterest enemies.

Hester. Oh, then, my dear, dear madam, do not tell Sir Oswin who I am, *till* I am *gone* away—Indeed, I'll go the moment he has seen me.—*But,* if you please, I had rather go now.

Mrs. M. Do you think Mr. Willowear has told my brother who you are?

Hester. No; I am sure Mr. Willowear does not know himself: for my guardian, fearing he might object to my father's misfortunes, always charged me to conceal my real name from him.

Mrs. M. Then, I promise you, my brother shall never know it from me. Your guardian, indeed, en-

joins me silence to all but Sir Oswin; of course, he can hear it no other way. And this secret of your birth, Mr. Ashdale adds in his letter, was in consequence of a promise your father extorted, when he left you to his care.

Hester. My father made him promise also, he would treat me with kindness; but in that, he never kept his word.

Mrs. M. You remember your father then?

Hester. Yes, yes; I shall always remember him; though, I fear, he has forgot me.

Mrs. M. You think, he is still living?

Hester. I hope so! but, for these two last years, no letter—no—

Mrs. M. Hush! hush! Sir Oswin!

[HESTER *hangs down her Head.*

Enter SIR OSWIN—*he passes his Sister, and stands between her and* HESTER.

Sir Os. [*After looking sternly at each.*] My business with you, madam, and with this young person, will be very shortly concluded. It is merely to express my displeasure, and to express it with warmth such as I feel, that *I* have been imposed upon by *you*. [*To his Sister.*] And that a worthy man has been imposed upon by *you*. [*To* HESTER.

Mrs. M. Brother, we have both done wrong, and both hope for pardon.

Sir Os. Amendment must precede forgiveness. She must return with her future husband.

Hester. Ah! Ah! [*Screaming.*

Sir Os. [*Roughly.*] What do you mean?

Hester. Oh, sir! did you know what it was to have a horror of being married!

Sir Os. [*Shrinks and hesitates.*] Well,—well,—suppose I did know, what then?

Hester. Then, you would pity me.

Sir Os. [*Aside.*] The poor girl has a repugnance to marriage, and I compassionate her.

Mrs. M. For my part, brother, though I have taken this young lady in, yet I have lectured her.

Sir Os. You "lecture her!" And by what authority have you lectured her?

Mrs. M. Ha! you think nobody is to give lectures but yourself.

Sir Os. [*Going near to* HESTER.] How old are you?

Hester. I am near seventeen.

Sir Os. I should not have thought you so much!

Hester. No: for not being used to fashionable company, I have nothing to say in conversation—except what I think.

Sir Os. 'Would to heaven all your sex had no more to utter. The family in which you lived, your guardian, I suppose, used his influence to persuade you to marry?

Hester. Yes; and Mr. Willowear used his *influence* to persuade me too; but I had rather not.

Sir Os. I don't blame your being nice, and cautious, in respect to marriage; but you should not have given your lover hopes.

Hester. I could not tell him to *his face*, that I hated him.

Sir Os. But, you received *his presents.*

Hester. It was the only *favour I ever granted*, and he asked a thousand.

Sir Os. Favours!

Hester. He called them so. He said, he did not value the things he gave me, but for their being mine. Here is his great present of all—a diamond ring! Will you have it? I shall give it with as much pleasure to you, as he gave it to me, I dare say—and shall think it a greater favour.

Sir Os. [*To his Sister.*] This is a very singular girl, you have introduced to me!

Mrs. M. And I have introduced as singular a man to her—therefore, I trust, you will understand one another.

Sir Os. For my part, she has taken my understanding away.

Mrs. M. And as, I believe, she herself never had any, you will agree better and better.

Sir Os. [*To* HESTER.] I shall take this ring, and return it to its first possessor.—And, now, as you intend to abandon him, and your former home, what do you design to do? [*A Pause.*]—Whither do you intend to go?

Hester. I did intend to stay here. But, I suppose, you won't suffer it; though Mrs. Sarah Mortland invited me, or I should not have made so free as to come.

Mrs. M. Upon my word,—I only——

Sir Os. Hush! Hold your tongue.—I want to hear her talk, not you.—And would you be content to stay, and give up all your friends?

Hester. I hope I should find friends here.

Sir Os. You have no parents? no relations, I am told?

Hester. My mother died, when I was an infant.—My father went abroad,—perhaps is dead too: I never knew any other relations, and I hardly know my own surname; for I am always called Hester.

Sir Os. —A Mr. and Mrs. Ashdale brought you up?

Hester. But were so unkind to me, that I durst not tell them I wouldn't marry;—and, I hope, you will not send me back with a man I cannot love.

Sir Os. Then, you never loved him?

Hester. O! no, no.

Sir Os. Nor ever loved any other man?

Hester. O, no, never, never.

Sir Os. Nor ever could, I suppose?

Hester. [*After looking at him, unconsciously, from*

Head to Foot.] Yes,—yes,—yes,—O, yes.—I think I could.

Sir Os. I thought you said, you had set your heart against marriage.

Hester. No I have not.—No, no—but I should like to chuse my own husband.

Sir Os. How chuse? Women can't make love.

Hester. But they can listen.—And I'll never listen, but where the sound is sweet.

Sir Os. [*To his* SISTER.] I don't know how I can turn this girl out of the house. Poor creature! [*Affecting a smile of contempt.*] She has lost her mother, and is not sure whether or no she has a father.

Mrs. M. Then, do you be a father to her.

Sir Os. Is there such difference in our ages?—She's seventeen, and I am not above——

Mrs. M. No; but I have been so used to hear you call yourself an *old* man—

Sir Os. I beg your pardon, if I have—for *that's* making my elder sister a very old woman.

Mrs. M. Well, and I shall have no objection to being an old woman, while it is a privilege of that state to be of service to the young ones.

Hester. And you have been of great service to me—thank you—thank you.

Sir Os. Yes, sister—you are a very good woman, I believe; and if I do find fault with you, now and then, it is because I wish you to be my companion, and my companion to be as perfect as possible.—Yes indeed—I think you have done quite right in sheltering this poor orphan—and I recommend her to your further protection.

[*Passing* MRS. MORTIMAND *over to* HESTER.

Mrs. M. [*Going, returns.*] You'll dine with us, Sir Oswin?

Sir Os. [*Considering.*] Why, yes; I don't know that I am going any where—yes—I'll dine with you. [*Exe-*

unt MRS. MORTLAND *and* HESTER, *the latter courtesying low to* SIR OSWIN.] Poor girl! I really feel for her —poor girl! [*He walks about, moves the Chairs and Table—at last he takes up a Book, sits down and reads—of a sudden he rises.*] Yes, I'll see what can be done for this poor destitute girl. My sister, I dare say, can employ her in her domestic concerns. [*He sits down, and reads again; then takes his Eye slowly from the Book.*] She can read to my sister, perhaps, and be of use that way.—But what have I to do with women's business! Here, in the country, my books are my sole occupation; [*Musing.*] books my sure solace, and refuge from frivolous cares.—Books, the calmers, as well as the instructors of the mind. [*Looks in the Book some time, then rises.*] 'Sdeath! I cannot read.—What is the reason I cannot read? [*Going.*

Enter MR. WILLOWEAR.

Wil. Well, Sir Oswin, have you seen her?

Sir Os. Yes,—I have seen her.

Wil. And what do you think of my choice?

Sir Os. I think it a most imprudent one.

Wil. Why so?

Sir Os. Because she does not chuse you.

Wil. Did she tell you so?

Sir Os. Has she not proved so?

Wil. I wish you would let me see her.

Sir Os. No, by no means. [*Hastily.*] I told you that if she could exculpate herself,—and in truth this has been the case.—Her promise to you, she avers, was given under the influence of fear.—She has flown to this house for protection; and I believe the laws of hospitality oblige me.—Here is your ring—But, as to the simple girl, without her own express desire, I cannot give up her.

Wil. Well, if you say so—But, I assure you, you are, the only man to whom I would confide her.

Sir Os. You don't confide her.—She came hither of her own accord—and one cannot, upon reflection, turn from one's door a human creature of whatever sex, whatever age.

Wil. And hers, to be sure, is an interesting sex, as well as a tender age.

Sir Os. Which makes me the more concerned for her.

Wil. And yet you used to be so severe, so hard upon the women.

Sir Os. So I am still on women advanced in life; but one can't help having a sort of feeling for the young.

Wil. Did she part with this ring reluctantly?

Sir Os. No; with as much pleasure as if it had been yourself.

Wil. [*Sighing.*] So, then, I must resign all hopes of her, I find.

Sir Os. That's right—And do so like a man.

Wil. [*Sighing.*] I must seek for some other object to divert my thoughts.—What pretty women have you hereabouts, to banish Hester from my mind?

Sir Os. A number—a number. [*Eagerly.*

Wil. Who are they? What are their names? [*With indifference.*

Sir Os. I cannot exactly count them all over by name. [*Recollecting.*] Lady Susan Courtly, however, is among them, I know.

Wil. Is she here?

Sir Os. Yes. [*Eagerly.*

Wil. I once paid my addresses to Lady Susan—I have a great mind to renew them.—If she consented just now, it would take from the foolish, ridiculous figure I make, to be seen without a wife after being so near possessing one.

Sir Os. She lives close by, at my uncle's.—She's on a visit there, and his house is but on the edge of my

park. Come with me, and I'll show you a short cut through the grounds; And one of the pleasantest walks too—You can be there in a quarter of an hour.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Forest, and a ruined Cottage.

LAVENSFORTH *discovered stretched on a Bank, under a Tree—his Black* SERVANT *kneeling by him—an open Letter lying on the Ground.*

Amos. Master, dear master, raise your head, and speak to poor servant, poor black, who has attend you from boy in his native country, followed you to your own, and is ready to follow you all the world over. Only tell him why you no eat—why you no sleep—and why big tear roll down from your eye? [*A Pause.*] Master, why you left lodgings in village, and taken this poor hut in wild forest? House not fit even for blacks—No one live near—none but the birds.—Ah, forget! This letter he threw down, brought the bad news, that breaks his heart.

[*Takes the Letter from the Ground, and reads.*

Unhappy man,—in all things unhappy—your daughter, Hester, I fear is lost to you for ever. She eloped

from my care on the very day your packet arrived; and under such circumstances, that, perhaps, I may never hear of her again. If I do, I will certainly send her the letter you enclosed for her in mine. Yours,

R. ASHDALE.

Hester, that is his daughter's name; often he talks of her when in my country. Hester—poor Hester!

Lav. [*Starting, and raising his Head.*] Who said "Poor Hester!" Ah! poor! for she lost her mother at her birth, and her father, when she first began to know and love him. Did any one speak her name, or was it my imagination? [*Rises.*

Amos. It was I said, Hester.

Lav. Wherefore?

Amos. Because I know that name well; You so often spoke it in your sleep, while in hot countries I watched to fan you.

Lav. Ah! my dreams have been happier than my waking hours; for them I passed with her.

Amos. No, master, no; Your dreams sometimes unhappy; sometimes you start.—You angry in your sleep; You call for gun, for sword—You speak another name, not kind, as you speak Hester.

Lav. I speak of Oswin, then, in my dreams.

Amos. Ay, that's the name.

Lav. Of him, who has stripped me of every good I once possessed. Amos, I have a heart formed to love, and to hate, in the extremes—My daughter and this Oswin have, for thirteen years, shared it between them; to the one, the tenderest affection; to the other, deadly hatred. And now, that I have no longer a child, on whom to bestow my love, hate is the sole possessor of my bosom. But I will root it out.

Amos. Do, master, do.

Lav. I have no daughter, for whose sake, now, should retain my rage, and I will rid myself of it.

Amos. You will forgive?

Lav. I will. There is, however, but one way left, by which I can forgive Sir Oswin, and I will avail myself of that one. I will fix my dagger in his heart, and bear him malice no longer.

Amos. Have duel?

Lav. No; from that redress, years ago, I was restrained; and, the only friends I ever had on earth, are bound in penalties so large, to insure my forbearance, that I must steal upon him. Amos, invention, plot, cunning, disguise, and secrecy must be employed, even to procure such a meeting. But then, Oswin, on my knees, I vow your destruction, as you have effected mine. [*Rises.*] But my revenge shall be mercy, compared to yours. I will not stab your fame:—I'll only sheathe my poniard in your breast.—I will not alienate your friends, as you have done mine; but they shall follow you with lamentation to the grave.

Amos. Master, me commit that sin, not you. Me black, who been often wounded by white man, let me wound in return; then sail to my own country, and leave master still good man—no fear—no guilt.

Lav. You presume to complete my designs?—Avenge my wrongs? Know your distance! [*Then inattentive to him, as he has been through all the Scene, but where he particularly addressed him.*] Good fortune might have softened my mind, and driven out all impressions of revenge: But [*In Tears.*] the many ills which have succeeded his ambitious prosecution! my child! a female child, left without parents, the heaviest ill of all.—His courting popularity at my expense! his art of eloquence, which, in a boy, had power to crush a man. Of the miseries produced by talents so perverted, he shall feel his share:—He shall find I am not less cruel now, than when I ruled in my government;—that exile has not softened me. The young enthusiast but accused me of acts of despotism; he shall prove in his dying moments, there is not a crime too black for my accomplishment.

Amos. Good master, no more grief, but return to lodgings in the village.

Lav. No house shall shelter me, but this ruined cottage; no bed shall rest my limbs, and rack my brain, till I have revenged my wrongs. [*Goes into the Cottage, returns, and speaks at the Door.*] My enemy, this Sir Oswin Mortland, has a seat, not more than ten miles distant; Mortland Abbey. Inquire of the peasants what road he frequents; whether he passes this way to the next town; whether he hunts, or shoots, or strolls in his park of an evening: Gain all the intelligence you can. Revenge is dear to men of your complexion, even more than to those of mine: Therefore, I depend, not alone on your fidelity and secrecy, but on your eager exertions.

Amos. Oh, master! only kind master I ever had! I would die for your content.

Lav. Live, and execute my orders.

[LAVENSFORTH *retires into the Cottage, and* AMOS *into the Forest.*]

SCENE II.

A Saloon at LORD DANBERRY'S, *with Folding Doors into a Garden.*

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. [*Looking towards the Garden.*] There they are! there they are! Now would I give a hundred pounds, to know what Lady Sucan and Sir Oswin are saying to each other. They have been together exactly five minutes and a half by my stop-watch. He has certainly begun the subject by this time; but

I can't know any thing of their conversation unless I join them; and that would be a pity, for it would interrupt them. I found it difficult to drag him to my house, and more so to persuade him to wait on her in the garden. Then away I slipt, and now he is alone with her, he will be caught at once. He must speak now—here they come! here they come!—Yes, they are coming into this very room, as I live: Now he must break the matter without delay, and my wishes are completed. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR OSWIN *and* LADY SUSAN COURTLY, *from the Garden.—As he and* LADY S. *sit down,*

Sir Os. Lady Susan, I am a peculiar man, but a plain man: my peculiarity consists in my plainness. I am under the greatest obligations to my uncle, who bestowed on me an education, and tutors, who made me reflect; reflect particularly on my own passions, inclinations, faults, and failings. In return for his care, I wish to obey him in all his commands; but serious, sober, I'm afraid I may say, sullen habits, have ever been predominant with me; and I never was, and, perhaps, never shall be, in love.

Lady S. Sir Oswin, your candour is so bewitching, it is impossible to resist its force. I have been accustomed to so much flattery, such adulation from men of the world, whose ardour, I am sure, meant nothing; that I cannot help believing,—your apathy means a great deal.

Sir Os. You may deceive yourself, Lady Susan.

Lady S. And so may you, Sir Oswin.

Sir Os. As I observed before, madam, self-examination has been my daily practice.

Lady S. Perhaps you examine so frequently, that you weary penetration; and a passer-by, knows you better, than you know yourself.

Sir Os. That observation, madam, might hold true of a lady and her looking-glass; but not of a man and his faults.

Lady S. He must, however, be a very bad man, Sir Oswin, who sees his faults thus daily, yet does not amend them.

Sir Os. He will, at least, endeavour to shun all trials that he thinks beyond his strength; and, in that spirit, I fear a married life.

Lady S. Marriage may be productive of some faults; but, surely, 'tis a soil fit for the cultivation of every virtue,

Sir Os. Patience, I believe, may thrive there.

Lady S. But what do you say of the growth of conjugal love?

Sir Os. That conjugal hate too frequently chokes it.

Lady S. I long to convince you of your mistake.

Sir Os. [*Rising.*] Madam, to end the argument, and not to make my visit tedious;—If you think you can be happy with a man so much older than yourself, who reads all the day, and half the night—whose temper is not good—who is easily put out of humour——

Lady S. That I never am; therefore my good temper will make your fretful one, of no harm to either of us.

Sir Os. I'll say no more, madam; My uncle will tell you the rest of my imperfections.

Lady S. They must all appear trivial, Sir Oswin, when compared with that sincerity which discloses them. [*He bows.*] I am, you shall find, sir, as peculiar, as plain spoken for a woman, as you are for a man. I scorn, like you, to follow common modes and manners, which my own opinion, or my own convenience disapproves; And while you have the singular frankness to tell me to my face, that you had rather not have me for a wife, I will have the same simple candour, and confess—that, of all things, I should like you for a husband.

Sir Os. Good morning, Lady Susan.

Lady S. Good morning, Sir Oswin.

[*As* SIR OSWIN *is going,*

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. Stay, my dear nephew, stay; Nothing on earth could give me greater joy than to be present at this interview: So, prolong it a little for my sake.

Sir Os. I am afraid of intruding.

Lady S. Not at all, Sir Oswin. The man who has honoured me with the offer of his hand—

Lord D. Then the offer is made, and you are his betrothed wife?

Lady S. As you have previously told me, my lord: but Sir Oswin has said very little.

Lord D. Talking is not his talent; that is, talking to you women; for he thinks that would be encroaching on your privileges: when he speaks, 'tis for nothing less than the good of the nation.

Lady S. If I may judge of his other virtues by his humility, he will make the best husband in the world; for he assures me he shall be the worst.

Sir Os. My uncle knows, madam—

Lord D. I know that you are a good man, and, therefore, will make a good husband. You were the most dutiful son—you are an affectionate nephew—a good brother—a staunch friend—a friend to the orphan; for that pretty girl, whom you have just taken into your house, how kindly I saw you look on her!

Lady S. What pretty girl?

Sir Os. A child, madam; a mere child.

Lord D. Nothing the worse for being young; nor the worse for her beauty.

Lady S. Is she so beautiful, Sir Oswin?

Sir Os. I was going to say, I had never looked at her; but I did—I did.

Lady S. Who is she? What's her name?

Sir Os. I never asked: she was friendless, I heard.

Lord D. And well she might; for she ran from all her friends, and the man to whom she was going to be married, at the church door.

Lady S. What a surprising occurrence!

Sir Os. And yet I can conceive it might happen.

Lord D. But the best of the story is, (as her guardian has written just now to Mr. Willowear,) she persuaded a second lover of her's to hire the post chaise for her escape from the first, on a promise she would go off with him; but, as they were stepping into the vehicle, she pretended to swoon; and, while the poor man ran for a smelling bottle, she drove away, and left both her lovers in the same deserted state.

Sir Os. Can this be fact?

Lord D. Mr. Willowear but now showed it under her guardian's hand; who adds, he believes she will, in the end, prefer this second lover.

Sir Os. Who is he? What's his name? [*Anxiously.*

Lord D. He did not say.

Sir Os. 'Tis fit, however, I should search into the truth of this story, before she remains longer in my house. [*Going.*

Lord D. Nay, don't put yourself in a passion with her; don't go home on purpose—don't leave Lady Susan.

Sir Os. If it be proper to order Hester away, the sooner she knows my will the better.

Lord D. Then send a message to your sister; my own man shall take it, and see her safe off, at once.

Sir Os. No; she shall not go till she has received from my own lips, the reproof she deserves, for having dared to come.

Lord D. Why, then Lady Susan and I will go with you. Lady Susan, we'll go with my nephew.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Willowear. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter MR. WILLOWEAR.

Sir Os. Pray, Mr. Willowear,—But, no,—I'll talk to Hester herself. [*Going.*

Lord D. Nephew, nephew!—one word.

[*They talk together.*

Wil. Lady Susan, I did myself the honour of waiting on your ladyship yesterday; but you were not within.

Lady S. O! yes—I think they told me so.

Wil. Hearing your ladyship was in this part of the world, I came to confess my shame. I knew it would be impossible to conceal it from you, and I wished to be the first to announce it. I have been slighted, in the most public manner, by one of your sex, to whom I paid my addresses, in consequence of their having been rejected by you.

Lady S. She used you rightly, if you only made your offer on my refusal.

Wil. But, then, are not you bound to take pity on me now, if my attachment to you has ruined me with every other woman?

Lord D. [*Impetuously.*] You don't mean this seriously, I hope, Mr. Willowear; because Sir Oswin——

Lady S. My lord, let Sir Oswin speak for himself.

Sir Os. I can't think of interrupting my uncle, madam.

Lord D. Why, then, Mr. Willowear, this lady is engaged to Sir Oswin, and will shortly be his wife; and let me tell you, sir——

[*In a positive and angry Tone.*

Sir Os. My lord, how can you be so warm?

Lord D. Sir Oswin, how can you be so cold?

Sir Os. My lord——

Lady S. Don't interrupt your uncle, Sir Oswin.

Wil. I beg ten thousand pardons; but it was Sir

Oswin, who first told me Lady Susan was here. And I understood——

Lord D. You can't misunderstand any longer now, sir.

Wil. Upon my honour, I think I do—for Sir Oswin's going to be united to Lady Susan, is the most surprising!——Sir Oswin!—who has always protested there was no such thing as love.

Sir Os. But I never denied there was matrimony.

[*Exit* SIR OSWIN.

Lady S. What a prospect for me in the marriage state! But I'll be revenged for his chilling insolence; and nothing on earth shall make me resign him.

Lord D. That's right, my proud woman!

Wil. Lady Susan, I admire your spirit so much, that I have a great mind to say,—nothing on earth shall make *me* resign *you*.

Lord D. Would you supplant Sir Oswin, Mr. Willowear? Is it friendly?

Wil. 'Tis fashionable.

Lady S. Will you, my lord, insist on Sir Oswin's promise, given to you?

Lord D. I will;—I do insist upon it.

Lady S. Then I'll force him to marry me.

Wil. Do—and force him to love you too.

Lady S. So I will. For I'll bear his cruelty with so much good humour, that, unless his heart be more frozen than his manners, it shall beat with warmth to me. [*Exit.*

Wil. [*Following her.*] Stay, Lady Susan!—take pity on the only man who loves you—do not drive me to despair. [*Turns hastily.*] My lord, can you tell me of any other woman whom you think I could love?

Lord D. Why, upon my word, Mr. Willowear, it seems, as if you could love every woman you saw.

Wil. I own I am not difficult; but, I find they are so.

Lord D. My advice is, pursue Hester—try to redeem her; and, if you do not succeed——[*Considering.*] I have just thought of the very female, who will exactly suit you.

Wil. Of perfectly good character, I hope?

Lord D. The nicest.

Wil. Family?

Lord D. The very best in the country.

Wil. Fortune?

Lord D. Better than Lady Susan's.

Wil. When will you introduce me? [*Eagerly.*

Lord D. I'll mention the subject to her first, and settle every thing between you both, as I have settled between Sir Oswin and Lady Susan.

Wil. But that alliance does not appear to be quite settled yet—I hope you will be more successful for me.

Lord D. I'll be successful for you all. But, before I undertake *your* affairs, you must come with me to Sir Oswin's, and try to regain Hester.

Wil. My lord, I am of an easy, complying, satisfied disposition. I am willing to marry Hester; or Lady Susan; or the unknown female you propose; or, if she does not like me, some other. I am not one of those, who think "great care must be taken in the choice of a wife, that she may prove a blessing."

Lord D. No, say with me—great care must be taken how you treat a wife, and she will certainly be blessing. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR OSWIN MORTLAND'S.

Enter ROBERTS, JAMES, HARRY, *and* JOHN, *Servants to* SIR OSWIN.

Roberts. Do you run to the terrace, and see for her. [*Exit* JOHN.] Go you, and see if she's in the drawing-room. [*Exit* JAMES.] And run you into the park. [*Exit* HARRY.

Enter MRS. SARAH MORTLAND.

Mrs. M. What is the matter? What's all this confusion about?

Roberts. I thought Miss Hester was here, ma'am.

Mrs. M. And what did you want with her?

Roberts. Sir Oswin is just returned from Lord Danberry's; and desires to see her directly. He seems not very well pleased at something.

Mrs. M. You mean, he is in an ill humour.

Roberts. [*In a Whisper.*] He's coming, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR OSWIN.

Sir Os. [*In Anger.*] Where is your protègée, your companion, your innocent girl? Where's Hester?

Mrs. M. And now, give *me* leave to ask a question. Where is your elder sister? For one would suppose she was not within hearing.

Sir Os. She lost her consequence, when she listened to the tale of an impostor.

Mrs. M. What has thus changed you on a sudden? We passed yesterday in comfort all together—and your attention to this poor girl, was remarkable.

Sir Os. Who remarked it?

Mrs. M. Myself—Lord Danberry. However, do you want to see her?

Sir Os. I do.

Mrs. M. Then I'll send her to you—[*Aside.*] and glad of the opportunity to get away. [*Exit.*

Sir Os. [*In Anger.*] Women!—women!—women! —[*Altering his Tone, but still angry.*] Woman! woman! woman!—[*In greater Anger still.*] Woman!

Enter HESTER.

[*His Voice softens as he beholds her, and he tenderly pronounces*] woman!

[HESTER *courtesies, and appears timid.*

Sir Os. [*With a subdued agitation.*] If they were slight faults that you had committed, you would see me in anger;—as it is——as your indiscreet conduct has been flagrant—you find me impressed only with concern, that I am compelled to turn from my habitation, a friendless young woman, who has implored my protection—and afflicted—deeply afflicted—to behold depravity in one, who gave no warning to the eye, no caution to the ear, nor even to the understanding, to beware of her arts.

Hester. Am I artful? If you say so, I suppose I am; but, indeed, I did not know it.

Sir Os. Were not those arts, by which you deceived two lovers?

Hester. O! lovers! Yes, I have made fools of two lovers. But I had a right to do so—for they wanted to make a fool of me.

Sir Os. How so?

Hester. Why, Mrs. Ashdale, my guardian's wife,

and all the elderly ladies, that visited her, constantly said to me, "Hester, never mind what the men say; they are deceitful, and always speak falsehood to young women." So, I put no trust in them, nor they, I hope, in me.

Sir Os. One honourable man was on the point of marrying you, when you ran away.

Hester. I thought it was better to run away before marriage, than after.

Sir Os. But you broke your promise.

Hester. Not my marriage promise—for that I am resolved to keep, marry when I will: which makes me so afraid of giving it.

Sir Os. [*Aside.*] That is from the heart.

Hester. Have you any thing more to say against me?

Sir Os. Who was he that effected your escape?

Hester. I did not know him for a lover; but trusted him only as a friend, to procure me a chaise; when, on a sudden, thinking me in his power, he wanted to come away with me. So, I feigned illness, to leave him behind, too.—Any more reproaches?

Sir Os. Numberless. You have, in every instance, conducted yourself with so much imprudence, indecorum,—that I am offended you should have dared to come into this house.

Hester. Ay, now I hope you are speaking falsehood, as all the men do to young women.

Sir Os. I speak falsehood!

Hester. Only to women—don't be angry—I mean only to women.

Sir Os. I speak truth to every one; and it is true that you have forfeited my good opinion, and all that favourable impression, which your appearance first made on me.

Hester. Did I make a favourable impression on you? Oh! I am so proud of it!

Sir Os. [*Confounded.*] I—I give you leave to conceive this as a falsehood.

Hester. No:—you always "speak truth;" and I will believe this true, because I should be sorry to have it otherwise: for then, what would become of me? where should I go?

Sir Os. Return to those, who reared you from your infancy.

Hester. No, no, never.

Sir Os. Marry, and you'll have a home.

Hester. Why do you bid me marry? I am told that you don't like to marry any more than I do. But, sir,—is not this a fair proposal?—I'll marry, if you will.

Sir Os. [*Starting.*] Mr. Willowear, would you marry?

Hester. No; I'll make my own choice.

Sir Os. [*Agitated.*] And whom would you choose?

Hester. I'll tell you, if you'll promise I shall have him.

Sir Os. [*After a Pause.*] Hear me, Hester—I sent for you, to upbraid, to reproach you—to show my displeasure—my resentment; but, you talk so differently from all the world besides, that—that—I have no words to give in exchange for yours, but such as I feel disinclined to utter.

Hester. Are they cruel, or kind words, that you suppress?

Sir Os. I hardly know their meaning.

Hester. Speak them, and I'll explain them.

Sir Os. No, no;—no explanations.

[*He walks about in Disquietude.*

Hester. [*After a Pause.*] And now, if my examination is over, am I to stay or go?

Sir Os. I am not determined.

Hester. Shall I determine for you.

Sir Os. [*After a Struggle.*] I confess, since the con-

versation which has just passed between us, I feel a reluctance to say those harsh things, I meant to do, before I saw you.

Hester. We feel something alike; for, before we met, I intended to say a thousand kind things, to persuade you to let me remain here; but the moment I saw you, I felt reluctant to speak them.

Sir Os. It is not discreet in a woman, to speak with kindness to men.

Hester. Not if they speak kindly to her: but when they are cross, like you, she may be kind with safety.

Sir Os. Hester, with all your faults, I feel an interest in your welfare. And when I say, I feel for another's happiness, I am not interested slightly. You have been imprudent, and I have censured you—but, in the hope my censure may have influence, I commence, from this hour, a friendship—a sincere friendship, for you. Remain in this house while it suits your convenience, and reveal to me all your heavy sorrows, all your anxious troubles—my power shall protect, my sympathy shall console you.

Hester. [*After pausing a little Time, impressed with Surprise.*] Oh! this serious, this solemn profession of regard for me, has ruined all my hopes, all my expectations!

Sir Os. How so? How?

Hester. Because it forces me to be serious and solemn with you. While you were proud, I could treat you lightly;—while you were angry, I did not regard you;—while you were severe, I could laugh at you. But now you are generous, humble, mild, I cannot impose on you—cannot deceive you longer.

Sir Os. Deceive me! In what? Don't I know all your faults?

Hester. Not half of them.

Sir Os. Have a care! you may yet lose me as your friend.

Hester. I may—Oh, I *must!*—I know I *must!*—I

shall not make my confession unwarily; for I know, the moment you have heard it we shall part, never to meet again. Yet, I had rather it should be so, than live with you every day, and be ashamed to lift up my eyes in your presence.

Sir Os. [*Alarmed.*] Why ashamed? Why are you to be excluded from the right, which every one who is friendless has to my protection?

Hester. [*Trembling.*] Because I am the unhappy child—of the unfortunate Lavensforth.

Sir Os. [*Starting with Horror.*] My enemy! my mortal enemy! The man, who has threatened, who has repeatedly sworn, to take my life! [*She falls gradually on her Knees, as he speaks thus to himself.*] The man, whom my rigour has irritated to this phrenzy! Ay, Oswin, reason for your foe, as well as for yourself.—Act, too, for him. [*To her.*] I do not discard you for your father's sake; and you shall be still nearer to me for your own. [*Raises her.*] Nay, why this trembling, this tremour?

Hester. Wherefore am I thus impelled, thus forced, to love the man who was my father's enemy?

Sir Os. If I continued such, I would not offend you with the offer of my services. But time and reflection have made me doubt of his demerits, and my own justice in arraigning him.

Hester. Ah! do you say so? Do I hear there is a doubt—a supposition—a hope, that my dear father has been unjustly accused?

Sir Os. From his open, his once professed enemy, his daughter shall receive his character; and before she blesses—honours—my abode with her future residence, shall know—that I respected the man whom I impeached: for esteem was not incompatible with that peculiar suit I preferred against him. And, now, while compassion suggests numerous excuses for his past deeds—and impartiality obliges me to reprove

my own,—do you, his representative, accept all the retribution I can offer for measures too severe, perhaps, in the cause of political warfare.

[*He takes her Hand, and embraces her tenderly.*

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. Ah! what! my rigid, reserved nephew, with a fair maid in his arms! Oh! you can unbend, I find, serene and mighty potentate, when no one is by. [*To* HESTER.] Madam, Mr. Willowear is in the next room, come to claim you—you blush!—but never mind—I won't tell—mum!——For my part, Sir Oswin, I am rather glad to see that you can get a pretty girl in a corner; for if you do one, you soon may another; and Lady Susan, perhaps, has no cause to despair. Mum!—hush!—I won't say a word—only I must laugh—ha! ha! ha! Is this the lesson you came home to give the poor orphan? Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Os. My lord, you——

Lord D. No excuses—'tis all very well—only give a little of your kindness to Lady Susan.——I thought it would show itself at last!

Hester. Sir——

Lord D. No excuses, my dear—I forgive—no excuses.

Sir Os. My lord, you put me in a rage!

Lord D. Ay, the cold fit has been gone some time.

Hester. My lord, Sir Oswin was so kind——

Lord D. You need not tell me. I saw how kind he was!

Sir Os. Hold!—that lady must not be insulted—she is under my protection.

Lord D. Well, this is leaping from the "freezing point" to "fever heat" at once! One moment in Lapland, the next under the torrid zone! I wish you joy, young lady, of this your third lover; but, per-

haps, I should not be so content, if a fourth was not behind.

Sir Os. A fourth lover!

Lord D. Yes; her guardian has just sent a post-chaise (at least a messenger, who was to procure one, if he found her here) to take her to a fourth lover, who may, perhaps, extinguish your burning flame.

Hester. Oh, Sir Oswin, save me from my guardian, and his tyranny!

Sir Os. But if your guardian possesses any power, any authority, I have no legal right to withhold you. [*Sighing.*

Hester. But, you may have.

Lord D. There,—she speaks as plain English, as ever I heard a woman utter.

Sir Os. Plain English is what so few of the English do speak,——

Enter MRS. SARAH MORTLAND, *with two Letters in her Hand.*

Mrs. M. Hester,—[*When* MRS. MORTLAND *calls out* "Hester," LORD DANBERRY *passes by* SIR OSWIN *towards* HESTER.] Here is a letter for you, which came inclosed in this to me; and there's a person from your guardian, who begs to see you instantly.

[MRS. MORTLAND *retires, reading her own Letter.*

Hester. [*Looks at the Address of her Letter with surprise, and kissing it, exclaims apart.*] My father's hand! Oh, unexpected happiness! [*Exit hastily.*

Sir Os. Her guardian! What can all this mean?

Lord D. [*Apart.*] I must have an eye upon this girl. She must not belong to my family. [*Looking suspiciously at* SIR OSWIN.] I must watch her.

[*Exit, following* HESTER.

Mrs. M. [*Advancing to* SIR OSWIN.] You are absorbed in thought! May I ask what is the subject of your reflections?

Sir Os. A confused mass! I am living in this old world, and yet a new one seems to have broken upon me, to make me as a stranger to all around.

Mrs. M. Shall I inform you, where you are?

Sir Os. It would be an act of charity.

Mrs. M. But will you take it charitably?

Sir Os. Yes.

Mrs. M. You are—in love.

Sir Os. [*Starts.*] What makes you think so?

Mrs. M. Don't you feel so?

Sir Os. No,—no,—no,—let's hope not,—no—no.

Mrs. M. You have all the symptoms.

Sir Os. No—no.—And who made you a judge?

Mrs. M. That is a secret I shall keep to myself.

Sir Os. Women, to be sure, know every thing.

Mrs. M. The reason is—women feel every thing. Men's perception lies only in the head; ours comes from the heart. Brother, the two sexes are thus contrasted—Sensibility gives us wisdom, but takes it away from you men. When man is governed by his heart, he's less than woman—and *we* are the lords of the creation.

Sir Os. In this case neither my heart nor head convicts me.

Mrs. M. No; for they dupe you.

Sir Os. Do you speak in earnest? [*Frightened.*

Mrs. M. Most assuredly.

Sir Os. [*Trembling and reaching a Chair.*] Why, then, if I am in love,—if it must be so,—I may as well submit. [*Sits down.*] It is vain, I suppose, to contend with my passion, and I must give myself up to my fate? Hard fate? after all my studies, my researches, my meditations, my zeal for the public good!—And what am I to do, in respect to Lady Susan?

Mrs. M. You must tell her you prefer another.

Sir Os. [*In the same distressed tone.*] If I told her I was married to another, she would say she liked me

the better for it. [*Recovering his spirits.*] Hester is different from her: she has a horror of the marriage state.

Mrs. M. So, from the self-same antipathy arises this dangerous sympathy. But as I allured you into her power, it is my duty to snatch you from it. This letter was just now brought me from her guardian.

Sir Os. [*Takes the Letter and reads.*] *Madam, do me the favour to give Hester the inclosed, the contents of which she is bound to keep secret. All I shall add is, that you can, upon no pretence whatever, detain her longer, when I assure you, that this inclosed letter comes to her from one, who (as I have acquainted him with her flight) must be in the deepest despair till he sees her; as there is between them a mutual and indissoluble affection.*

A mutual affection! [*Rising.*] Yes, I observed her delight on seeing the hand which directed her letter.—'Tis true, she has a secret lover, and I will search him out, or——

Mrs. M. Now this is jealousy.

Sir Os. [*Starting.*] Jealous; do you accuse me of love, and then dare to add jealousy?

Mrs. M. They follow naturally.

Sir Os. Why, then, welcome all the tumultuous passions at once; for I find my heart is as unable to resist the one as the other.

[*Throws himself into a Chair.*

Mrs. M. Ah! I foresaw—

Sir Os. Why did you not caution me, then? why did you not tell me? I felt no fears—I despised all danger—[*Starts up.*] Why did you ever bring her to my house? Or, rather, why not long since? For, till I knew *her*, I never knew one rapturous sensation.

Enter HESTER, *with a Letter in her Hand.*

Hester. I am come to take my leave of you for ever.

Sir Os. Why so?

[MRS. MORTLAND *goes round to* HESTER.

Hester. I must not tell you why.

Sir Os. And do you go by your own consent?

Hester. I do.

Sir Os. Then wherefore do you weep?

Hester. Half these tears are for joy, half for sorrow.

Sir Os. Explain.

Hester. I dare not; but must follow my guardian's directions, and immediately set off in the carriage, which his servant, who brought this letter, is gone to procure me.

Sir Os. Alone?

Hester. All alone.

Sir Os. Not an hour ago you solicited me to save you from your guardian's power.

Hester. But I was not then acquainted with the cause, which—Oh! Sir Oswin, an impulse you know nothing of compels—and the same impulse (confident as I am in your nice honour) ties my tongue from saying what the occasion is, which calls me.—All my own actions—all my own thoughts, I confess boldly; but when I am entrusted with the thoughts and the concerns of others, I can be mute as death.

Sir Os. You are going to a lover.

Hester. No more—than I am leaving one behind.

Sir Os. And if you thought, you were?—

Hester. Have I any right to think so?

Sir Os. Do you ask me seriously?

Hester. Yes.

Sir Os. Why, then, I——

Enter LORD DANBERRY.

Lord D. The chaise waits—the postillion's in a hurry.

Hester. Oh dear! how could you interrupt what he was going to say?

Lord D. Hear what I have to say—The chaise is at the door—'twill be dark in half an hour—no moon—the heath you have to cross is dangerous, on account of robbers—and the rivulet, at the bottom of the hill, has, probably, overflowed.

Enter a MAID SERVANT.

Here's your hat and cloak.—[*He takes them of her, and gives them to* HESTER.] I sincerely wish you a good journey, and I'll hand you to the door.

[*Exit* MAID SERVANT.

Sir Os. No, uncle, as the danger is so great, I'll order my horse and pistols, and ride by the side of the carriage. It would not be common hospitality to suffer a female to leave my house, unprotected, through such perils as you have described.

[*Taking her Hand, and going.*

Hester. [*In a low Voice.*] You must not go with me, for the world—not for the world, Sir Oswin.

Sir Os. This alarm is suspicious!—What does it mean?

Hester. Dear Mrs. Sarah Mortland, persuade your brother—my lord do not suffer him to go with me.

Sir Os. These efforts to prevent me, fix my determination. [*Aside to* MRS. MORTLAND.] To see her meeting with her lover, will be my cure at once.

[*Leading her to the Door.*

Hester. I hope that, when I have passed the dangerous part of my journey, I shall have power to persuade you to return.

Sir Os. Perhaps, you may.

Hester. [*Aside.*] If not, I must reveal to whom I am going.

Lord D. Nephew—nephew! [SIR OSWIN *returns.*] You had a fixed opinion there was no such passion as love.—What can you say now?

Sir Os. Like other theorists, say—I was mistaken.

[*Exeunt* SIR OSWIN *and* HESTER.

Lord D. [*To* MRS. MORTLAND] Did you ever see any thing like this?

Mrs. M. Yes; for this is not the first time I have seen a man in love.

Enter MR. WILLOWEAR.

Lord D. My dear Willowear, did you not meet Sir Oswin, leading away in triumph your intended wife? Run after him, and take her from him; pray now do.

Wil. No—let Hester go—and let Lady Susan go. —I am curious and impatient to see the woman you you have promised me.

Lord D. You shan't see her; nor will I reveal who she is, till you have followed Sir Oswin.

[*Walks about in anger.*

Wil. Then I'll make inquiries elsewhere. [*Bows to* MRS. MORTLAND, *and goes up to her.*] I beg pardon, madam; but, as I have the honour to meet you in the house of Sir Oswin, I imagine you know the name of Willowear? [*She bows assent.*] And know that he has met with a certain disappointment?

Mrs. M. I do sir.

Wil. I am that unfortunate lover.—Can you, madam, give me advice how to repair my loss? Do you know any woman of reputation who will marry a man in my forsaken state.

Mrs. M. Upon my word, I am so little acquainted with any, except the married women of our neighbourhood!—I assure you Mr. Willowear, I have hardly an acquaintance who is a single lady, although I am single myself.

Wil. Are you unmarried, madam? [*To* LORD DANBERRY, *aside.*] Who is this lady? I was never introduced to her.

Lord D. She is Sir Oswin's sister—my niece—and the very woman I mentioned for your wife.

Wil. [*Having viewed* MRS MORTLAND *earnestly.*] My wife! my wife!

Lord D. No fear of running away from the church door, there.

Wil. Marry her!—I should be the jest of all my acquaintance.

Lord D. That you will be, at any rate.

Wil. Mine is a desperate case.

Lord D. And, to tell you the truth, I don't believe that even *she* would accept you.

Wil. Now you pique me to make the offer. [*Goes to her.*] Madam, you are Mrs. Sarah Mortland, I find. [*She courtesies.*] If I thought you would pardon what I am inclined to utter——

Mrs. M. Pray speak out, sir.

Wil. Will *you* accept a man, slighted by all your sex?

Mrs. M. Would you marry a woman, who has been slighted by all yours?

Lord D. To be sure:—for then you can't laugh at each other.

Mrs. M. If you could, Mr. Willowear, marry such a woman, I give you in reply—that at my time of life, I feel for every man the same disregard, the men all felt for me in my younger days. [*Exit.*

Wil. [*Confounded.*] What can I do now, my lord? Will you——

Lord D. No—I can do no more—After being refused by a maiden lady of fifty, all hope is over.

[*Exit* LORD DANBERRY.

Nay, hear me, my lord.—Oh! that I had but Irwin's aversion to matrimony. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Forest and Cottage.

Moonlight.

Enter LAVENSFORTH.

Lav. How seldom do we taste the goods, which nature bestows, till we are deprived of those that are the work of art! To see the *sun set, and the moon* rise, is to me, robbed of every other pastime, sublime amusement! And were fortune now to shower on me all its wealth, and other hoarded blessings, still I should ever think—Hark! what noise?——Amos, returning from the village!—perhaps with letters.—The thought of news makes me shudder; for 'tis so many years since I have received welcome tidings!—Still I send, and long for letters.—But, now, what intelligence can they bring me, except the confirmation of my Hester's loss.—Hark! again;—That sound was like a groan!—No;—my own dark designs, my own black determinations, haunt me, and, in every whisper of the wind through these lofty oaks, I hear the cry of murder.

Sir Os. [*From the Wood.*] Ho! ho! Cottagers, lend assistance!

Lav. [*Calling out.*] Who's there in distress? Amos, is it you? Speak again, that I may know which way the sound——

ter SIR OSWIN, *pale, and near fainting.*

. Good friend, a villain on the road has fired

[*Going towards him.*] Ha! who's that? Who
? You are wounded, sir; lean on me—Come
cottage. Let me bind your wounds. [*Tear-
eckcloth from his own Neck.*] Then haste for
ssistance, and raise the village in pursuit of the

Os. He is fled; I have rode a mile, at least,
received my wound; for my horse took fright
report of the piece, and I had no power over
ll he was stopped by this wood.
If you can walk into the cottage, it will be
than——
Os. There is a lady in a carriage, with whom I
company, whose safety is more important to me
y own.—She was under my protection.—Lead
o the house; then, my good friend, go in search
; silence her fears, and order the postboy to
ither—he can take me home.
. Here is, in this hut, a kind of couch, on which
ay rest, when I have bound up your wound:
then instantly do as you have directed.
n me; I can support you—Your blood flows
Do not talk, I charge you—it will exhaust you
But lean on me—lean on me—lean on me.
, *drawing* SIR OSWIN *gently into the Cottage.*

AMOS, *in Fright and Terror—A Firelock in his Hand.*

. Master! master! Where is he? [*Looks into the Cottage Window, and about.*] Cannot ! away,—is not to be found—I, left to feel

joy—[*Reflecting.*]—and sorrow alone! Ah! cannot bear, alone.—Master—master.—Come; I happy with you—but what, what do, if ever left alone? [*Trembling.*

Enter LAVENSFORTH, *from the Cottage.*

Lav. What's all this talking! Fly instantly for the village surgeon.—Here is a gentleman within, ha been wounded by some villain, who fired at him the road.

Amos. [*Starting.*] Here? here?

Lav. Yes, here.

Amos. [*With expression of Joy, and savage Fu* It is Sir Oswin! [LAVENSFORTH *starts.*] It is Oswin.

Lav. You speak falsehood.

Amos. Master, it is he.

Lav. No; such joy, such triumph, was nev meant for me. Yet the sound *pleases me*—repeat —say again, it is he.

Amos. I know it. As I, returning from the village—this gun in my hand, which had lately borrowed—heard carriage stop on road, and postillion inquir his way—I answered to him—on which—lady fro chaise-window said to gentleman on horseback— "Now, Sir Oswin, you go no further." I start a that name—went close to horses' side, and asked, i he was Sir Oswin Mortland, of Mortland Abbey. He answered, "Yes." My hand, before my thought, caught trigger of my gun, and——[*Trembling.*] His horse ran away.—I came home.

Lav. Strike a light. [*Exit* AMOS *into the Cottage.*] I'll look at him as he reclines on his couch—I shall know him. [*A Light appears at the Cottage Window,* AMOS *re-enters.*] I have cause to know him.

LAVENSFORTH *goes into the Cottage.*

Amos. Ah! I again alone! Nobody to speak—all to think—thoughts bad company—good company once. Oh! I cannot, cannot live, if I am alone.

Enter LAVENSFORTH *from the Cottage.*

Lav. 'Tis he! 'tis he! the lineaments of his face are neither altered by time, nor the loss of blood. The man who has injured me bears the same features, thank Providence! as in the days of his malignant triumph. There can be no mistake; my eye, my heart, my very soul, recognizes the man. Ah! never more will I arraign just fate, who now has sent my worst enemy under my roof, [*Takes out a Dagger.*] and wounded to my hand! [*Starts.*] Under my roof, and wounded to my hand!—why then, I must not harm a hair of his head!—my limbs are chained, though my revenge is raging to burst forth. Oh! would he now start up in health and vigour, surrounded by his host of friends, how boldly would I defy, and stab him to the heart. But this good fortune, these secure means of vengeance, which every skulking coward would enjoy, I, bound by a tyrannical word, called honour, dare not use.

Enter SIR OSWIN *from the Cottage.—Exit* AMOS, *drooping under Confusion and Remorse at his Presence.*

Sir Os. My good host, you have bound my wound so effectually, that the bleeding is wholly stopped; and I find my strength so well recruited by this short repose, that I hope the injury I have sustained will prove but slight. As the chaise I mentioned is not come, if you can help me to my horse, which, probably is still about this thicket, I shall thank you.—I am Sir Oswin Mortland, [LAVENSFORTH *shows great Emotion.*] and, if you'll call to-morrow at my house [*Observes* LAVENSFORTH'S *Countenance, then his Dagger.*] Ah! an instrument of death in your hand!

Have I been betrayed into this place? What mean you by that weapon?

Lav. I mean that it shall rest here, [*Putting it up.*] till you are safe at home.

Sir Os. Till I am safe at home! What then?

Lav. Then—it shall rest, till your health is restored.

Sir Os. You seem to imply some menace.—Man, who are you?

Lav. Your sworn, your mortal, your just enemy, —Lavensforth.

Sir Os. [*After a Pause of Amazement.*] You know the penalty under which the laws forbid my meeting you: that consideration, I am now compelled to wave, and to tell you—I have still strength and spirit to defy your threats. [*Takes Pistols from his Pockets.*] Choose one of these, and take your ground.

Lav. [*Takes a Pistol, then, seeming to make an Effort.*] No; mean as this habitation is, proud man, it is mine; and you shall feel the weight of my protection. [*Throws away the Pistol.*] while you are within its precincts.

Amos. [*Without.*] A lady—a lady call for Sir Oswin.

Sir Os. [*To* LAVENSFORTH.] Your conduct towards me, is that of a generous foe,——[*Enter* HESTER, *leaning on* AMOS—*Exit* AMOS *into the Cottage.*] and merits a return like this, [*Goes to* HESTER.] to prove me worthy of it—Lavensforth, your daughter.

Lav. My daughter! my daughter in your care!

Hester. [*Trembling.*] If you are Lavensforth, I am your child. [*Kneeling.*] Your once-loved Hester; most unkindly treated by those friends, with whom you trusted me, and sheltered from misfortune by——

[*Looking towards* SIR OSWIN.

Lav. My enemy!

Hester. No, my father; the defender of your fame, and his own accuser, in all the conversations I had with me, when your misfortunes were the sub- Then do not rob him of the praise due to his pi


00043269

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 28 September, 2015

